

INSIDE

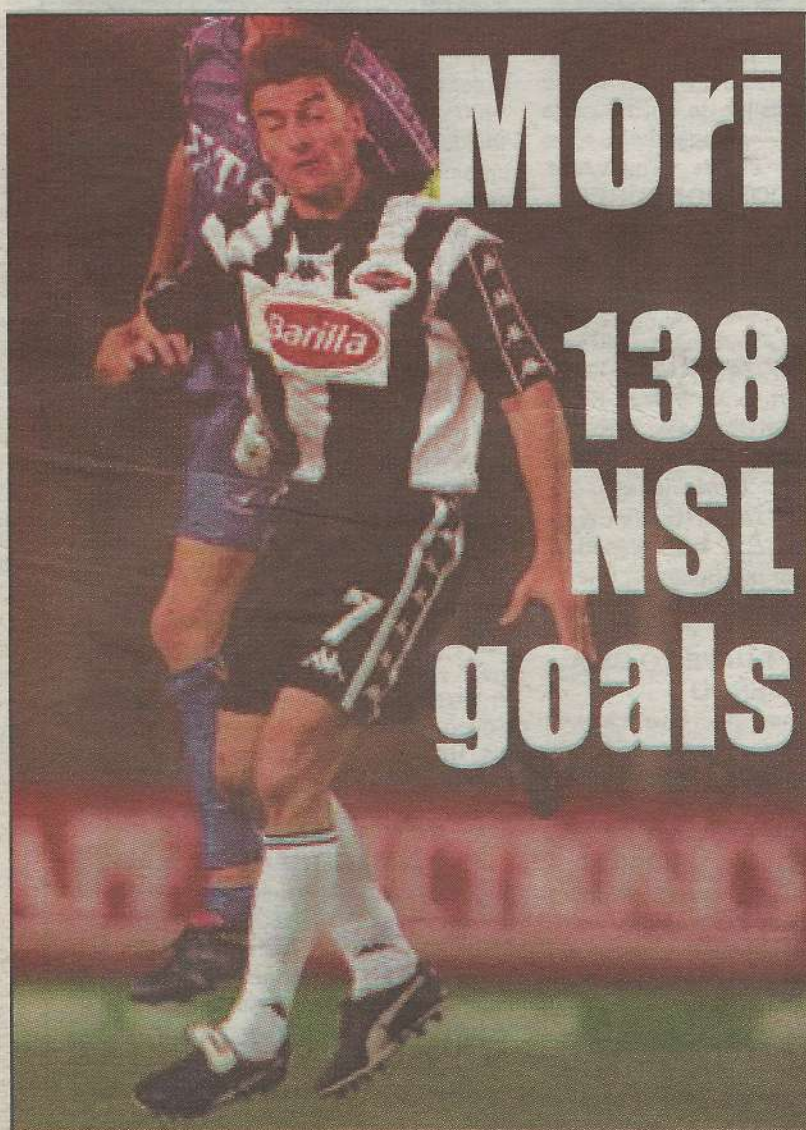
Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

SOCCER

Registered with Australia Post as a publication PP224696/00050 - ISSN 1321-8980

March 7, 2000. \$3.00

DEADLY DAMIAN BREAKS RECORD



Damian Mori may have become the all-time highest NSL scorer last Friday night, but the Socceroo striker was keen to play down his feat, preferring to emphasize the importance the team has in his goal-scoring success.

Mori's two goals against Sydney United at Hindmarsh Stadium last Friday night in the 4-0 home win saw him equal then beat Rod Brown's 137 goal record.

Ironically it was also against Sydney United that Mori scored the fastest league goal at 3.7 seconds.

"I am not a master striker, I am just a striker and my record is there to be broken," Mori said humbly.

"The way I look at it, everyone has a role to play in a team. My role is to score goals," he explained.

"I think I am just doing my job for the team. The disappointing thing is that we are not in the six, I would have probably enjoyed this a little more had we been in the six.

"The focus now is for us to make the finals. Scoring always feels good, but now it takes the burden off a little," said the new record holder.

"All I need to do is score for the team and that's what I have been doing after a little bit of a lean spell this season."

Mori's career began in Victoria, yet his early days at clubs like South, Sunshine and Knights rarely caught the eye, but it was his move to Adelaide that has made him the most consistent striker of the modern Australian era.

However if a move in the mid-90s to crack

German club Borussia Moenchengladbach had worked out, the Brown record would probably still be standing.

"I wouldn't change Germany for anything," recalled Mori.

"The only thing I regret about my time was that maybe I should have stayed there a little longer and I didn't do as well as I could have.

I have no regrets though... I am happy playing here."

Rod Brown, speaking to *Inside Soccer* from Brisbane, was extremely happy for Mori.

"It's good for Damian. Records are there to be broken. Congratulations and go on and score plenty more mate," was Brown's message.

The former Brisbane Striker is currently assistant coach with Gary Phillips at the QAS youth team.

The more important question now is: how long will it take before this record can be beaten? Given Mori's age and appetite for the game, a career tally of 170-180 is not inconceivable in this new century.

Mori however refused to speculate on his future plans. He is off contract at the end of the season and would be one of the NSL's most sought after players, such is his marketing potential and playing ability.

Sadly though, the marking of Mori's magnificent feat went largely unnoticed outside of Adelaide. A golden opportunity to market soccer has once again gone begging.

Greg Blake's column on page four deals exclusively with this Aussie champion's fantastic achievement.

'Frogga', *Inside Soccer* salutes you.

Beardsley's first game
"I should not have been taken off"
Why did SA choose IEC?
Blakey chats to IEC's Bert Mariani
Southern Sharks
Their NSL bid (right) is launched



Crooky



After our 3-0 loss to Wollongong Wolves the time has come to start building for the future.

It is a sad thing to admit but with 10 games remaining you would have to say that our season is all but over.

Only an amazing turn around in form will get us back on track for the top six, which is mathematically possible but highly unlikely.

There is no point in us chasing improbable dreams for this year. The time has come to look forward and try to rebuild for next year.

Obviously the transfer market is something the club will be looking at to build the squad, but for this year we have to make sure we give the talented young kids we have at the club every opportunity to show us exactly what they can do.

Our squad is quite young when you look at it.

Adam Griffiths, Michael Cunico, Simon Catanzaro, Jack Sobczyk and Matthew Langdon are all under 21 while Paul Henderson is just 23.

All of the guys mentioned above have had differing opportunities in the top grade and very few times they have come up short.

We will now be putting our fate in their hands as we look towards building a squad that can take Northern Spirit forward.

We haven't been helped by injury in recent times but David Seal's return was encouraging against Wollongong.

He came into the match at half time

and after watching Wollongong dominate the match for the 30 minutes before half time 'Sealy' at least put himself about and tried to get some shots away.

One effort was well saved by the Wolves 'keeper and it looks like David is ready to take up where he left off before injuring his quadricep muscle.

As usual we started well and should have taken the lead after just five minutes when Paul Bilokapic had a shot cleared off the line, but we fell apart after conceding a goal from the penalty spot after 20 minutes.

It was an all too familiar tale for Northern Spirit fans and everyone involved with the club is very embarrassed about what went on.

Our fans have been tremendous since we came into the NSL and if we want them to stick around we know we have to provide better entertainment than the tripe that was dished up on Friday night.

As for the future, I think we have a good bunch of kids at the club and if we can attract the right mix of experienced players to the club then we can go forward next season.

Ian Crook
Northern Spirit and England

S-news

Inside Soccer's
Australian news
and gossip

KOSSIE'S MAILMAN

Strikers coach John Kosmina has a, shall we say, strained relationship with certain sections of the media. Here is an example after the Glory game on Saturday night with Gary Legg of the Courier Mail.

Legg: "You said some guys from the start of the season aren't performing - who are they?"

Kossie: "There's a couple of senior players I'm not happy with - one in particular - but he'll probably ring you anyway and have a whinge about what I said to him at half time."

Legg: "So is that Nick Meredith?" (who, by the way, seemed to have a few words to say as he was subbed)

Kossie: "I don't know Leggy, you're telling the story"

Legg: "No, you are."

Kossie: "I didn't say a name - you picked it up, not me."

After the conference, Kossie went off at Legg about the amount of Strikers-related "political shit" being covered by the Courier Mail. Legg said it was happening, so he has to report on it. Kossie said it has nothing to do with the game and abused him for mentioning an upcoming meeting at the QSF in what should have been a match preview. Legg said something about the paper having to do its job, to which Kossie said "there is no f-----g paper in this town you f----- little w----- etc etc." That's nice.

SOCCEROOS HONOURED

A month ago, one of Club Brugge's fan-clubs has held a survey. People were asked who their favourite player ever was. Over 800 fans participated and these were the results: 1 Jan Ceulemans 40% 2 Franky Van der Elst 24% 3 Mario Stanic 7% 4 Lotte Lambert 5.5% 5 Jean-Pierre Papin 6 **PAUL OKON** 4% 7 Robert Spehar 4% 8 **FRANK FARINA** 2.5% 9 Daniel Amokachi 2% Birger Jensen 2%

HISSEY FIT OF THE WEEK

Goes to an NSL club that refused its players to go to the Southern Sharks launch, reportedly 'if they value their contracts.'

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SOCCEROO

To succeed in coaching. Have a look at three of the top four clubs: Breakers, Wolves and Olympic. All coached by ex-players of slightly less lofty heights. There has to be a moral there somewhere.

DELAYED NSL DECISION

Soccer Australia's David Woolley flagged to S-news the possibility that if clubs did not sign up to the document there may be further delaying of the decision on the moratorium.

GST AND SOCCER

S-news has noticed a number of faxes IS has received after last week's story re. the above issue. The government's tax reform units will (hopefully) give us a response to the issues raised by next week's issue. Then again, this is the government.

BUONAVOGLIA ON RAMSAY

Is now officially the choice of S-news when we go out to dine (read: stuff our faces with calzone, pizza and whatever else we can order.) 'Celebrities' (I) seen dining there last week include buddies Mike Cockerill and Andy Harper. Speaking of Harps, has anyone ever seen him in the same room as David Basheer? We're just asking.

APS GAMES

Public Servants aren't all pen pushing plodders, but in fact virile sports heads. Victoria's Minister for Sport, Justin Madden, officially launched the second

Australasian Public Sector Games which will be held in Melbourne from April 26 to 30. A number of sports will be staged at the Games, including football which will be played as an outdoor six-a-side event at the prestigious Albert Ground - the first time football has ever been played there.

MARUSIC IN CHINA

Kresimir Marusic will probably leave Belgian side SK Lommel for China. Chinese club Hongta Kunming is interested but Lommel's asking price (14 million Bef, about AU\$ 550,000) is too high. After a long suspension, Marusic didn't make it to the first team anymore and he wants to leave. Lommel is currently last in the Belgian 1st div. If they can't avoid relegation, Marusic will be on a free transfer at the end of the season. But the Chinese Premier League starts in March, and Kunming wants to have the player right from the start of the new season.

STERGIBOY'S 150

Congratulations to occasional IS contributor and all-round good guy Marcus Stergiopoulos on his 150 NSL games last weekend. And Kingz officials hope to sign former Celtic player John Manners, 36, today. The striker who played with Kingz player-coach Wynton Rufer and coach Shane Rufer in the early 1980's has also played for French club Toulouse and is now with a Dutch second division club. Now we haven't heard of him either. The club is also negotiating with the Rufers to stay on and the Kingz hope to take more games on the road. Meanwhile former Wellington striker Chris Killen has landed a new contract with Manchester City, after impressive displays for the reserve and junior sides this season. Killen, a Rongotai College Old Boy and former Miramar player scored three goals on debut for the reserves against Grimsby.

SOUTH CLOSED DUE TO F1

South's offices will be closed from this Thursday to next Monday due to the Grand Prix. They will however have their mobiles on. The players apparently have been paid 40,000 each for their WWC involvement (no wonder they thumped Knights!). And today (Tuesday) Vaughan Coveny and Andy Vlahos are taking part in the Triple M Celebrity Golf Day. South is also holding Bingo nights after it received its license by the Gaming Authority. Ange to call the numbers?

RECALCITRANTS V POWER

Malaysia plays Power tonight at 6pm in a friendly at Parra Stadium. Mahatair's favourite team will play against a Power side likely to include a number of youth league players pushing for a spot.

OPPORTUNITY TO SEE OLYROOS

The State Government of Victoria has successfully negotiated with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) for the MCG to have the greatest allocation of Olympic Opportunity tickets of any Olympic venue. In Victoria more than 100,000 Olympic Opportunity tickets are now available for the Olympic football (soccer) matches at the MCG with prices ranging from only \$10 - \$19. These tickets are being offered to all Victorian schools - for children and their accompanying parents/guardians or school staff only.

STATE SOCCER

In the Gippsland league, Monash is on top after a 5-0 thrashing of Drouin in R1 while in QLD Bris City head the XXXX league after three rounds after a 2-0 away win over Rochdale Rovers last weekend. City unbeaten.

INSIDE SOCCER

PO BOX 3889
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

PHONE: (02) 9806 0554
FAX: (02) 9806 0553

MANAGING EDITOR: JOHN VRTARIC

Email: johnv@insidesoccer.com.au

EDITOR: AIDAN ORMOND

E-mail: editor@insidesoccer.com.au

Correspondents:

Melbourne: GREG BLAKE, MARK FISHER

Sydney: ROGER SLEEMAN, BEN CUBBY

IS's VALUED CONTRIBUTORS:

Alan Clark, Kevin Christopher, Melissa Muscat, Margaret Bowden, Stephen Webb, Donald Campbell, Paul Goodwin, Chris Dunkerley, Cameron Atfield, Lucio Viggiano, Dennis Gedling, Jeremy Ruane, Chris Conti, Richard Beazley, Michael Kmet, Mark Fowler, Daniela Raco, Anissa Tann-Darby, Ian Crook, Nick Guoth, Grant Stantiall, Roy Hay, Stuart Jones, Peter Smith, Steve Wilson, Anita Bulan, Scott O'Donnell, Markian Jaworsky, Cliff Hammond, George Lemon, Nathan Long.

ADVERTISING: SYDNEY: JOHN VRTARIC
(02) 98060554 or 0412 698 185
ROGER SLEEMAN (02) 9806 0554
MELBOURNE: GREG BLAKE (03) 9370 1217

RECOMMENDED
AND MAXIMUM
PRICE \$3.00



Photography: Allsport, Joe Palos, Brett Kluznik, Matt Curtis, Michael Cronin

Publisher: Inside Soccer Pty Ltd
A.C.N. 088 107 822

Printing: Apex Printers Arncliffe NSW Tel: (02) 9597 6866
Distribution: Wrapaway, Marrickville NSW Tel: (02) 9550 1622

* All material appearing in Inside Soccer is copyright and reproduction in any form whatsoever is expressly forbidden without the written permission of the publisher.

Beardsley criticizes Vanis

Guest star unhappy at being substituted

A Knights record home crowd of over 11,415 turned up to see the Melbourne Knights' derby against South Melbourne on Sunday, and perhaps more than 4,000 of the huge attendance was due to the presence of ex-England international Peter Beardsley - guesting for the Knights in a two-match spell.

Beardsley's presence in Australia had already attracted significant favourable media comment, and *Inside Soccer* sent Alan Clark to the game, to report on Beardsley's influence.

On balance, perhaps Beardsley's biggest influence was his effect on the attendance, rather than his effect on the game - Knights going down 0-4 - and at a reputed \$20,000 for each of his two games (LUK7,500), he probably paid for himself in the first game, with the second - against Perth Glory in a fortnight - meaning Knights will be in front on the deal.

But he was substituted after the hour, with his coach Vlado Vanis saying, "Beardsley was alright, he didn't make so many mistakes. But I thought I should take him off to bring on fresh legs to try to do something, but things didn't work well for us today."

Beardsley was disappointed to come off, as was some of the crowd who booed the decision to end his game prematurely. "I was booing myself," said Beardsley.

"It sounds big-headed, but (the crowd) came here to see me. I'm here for two games, Vlado has made a decision,

and it's down to him. I would have thought the directors of the club would have a word with him, but it's not my place."

"As a player (getting substituted) is not nice, but you get some sort of satisfaction that they conceded three goals after I came off."

It was clear from early in the game that South declined to man-mark him - using a zone defence which meant that it was mostly Richie Alagich who confronted him, as Beardsley principally played in the middle of midfield with a tendency at times to take a position a little to the right.

"We don't (man-mark) anyway," said South coach Ange Postecoglou. "We tend to concentrate on what we're doing. When we're playing well we don't really have to worry about the opposition. We weren't really worried about Peter - he's a

"It sounds big-headed, but (the crowd) came here to see me. I'm here for two games, Vlado has made a decision, and it's down to him. I would have thought the directors of the club would have a word with him, but it's not my place."

quality player - but he obviously served a purpose today - you look at the crowd and the occasion, and Melbourne Knights will be happy from that respect."

Within a minute of the game starting, Beardsley had won his first challenge, and set up a forward move through Mark Silic.

Shortly after he beat veteran South striker John Anastasiadis in the centre-circle to send a clever through pass forward, but the move subsequently broke down.

Midway through the half he had probably his best moment when he sent a long diagonal ball to the right wing to Paul Magdic. Magdic's cross was flighted for Ivan Kelic but Kelic's header was over.

Showing he was not here for a testimonial game, he had an off-the-ball tussle with South's diminutive captain Paul Trimboli shortly after, unseen by referee Mark Breeze.

And on the half-hour he showed a great touch on the ball with a step aside which took him past Alagich and gave himself room for a shot from 20 metres, but which Chris Jones capably dealt with.

But as the game wore on, it was clear we were seeing a player preferring to lay-off a one-touch pass, rather than become more grittily involved in what is clearly a toughly contested derby. Beardsley made himself available, and gave directions to his teammates, but mostly from a narrow band on the pitch twenty metres either side of the halfway line.

Early in the second half, Alagich easily outjumped him in a heading duel, and then after one hour's playing time, he was substituted for Michael Reda.

"When I came off (Knights) just fell apart," he said.

"I was surprised to be taken off. But



Peter Beardsley training with Knights before the South game. "When I came off (Knights) just fell apart."

it wasn't my decision - I wasn't here to make decisions like that. Somebody else made that decision, and as a player you have to respect it. They decided to do it - you'll have to ask them."

"I didn't think (I'd run out of legs) after an hour - if I did, I should be in a wheelchair."

"I felt good, I felt really sharp. It wasn't a quick game (because of the heat) - I think we could have played two games, and it wouldn't have been a problem. The pace is very slow, and very deliberate."

"I think the way the temperature was, that's obviously the way the game is played here," said Beardsley.

"The two (South Melbourne) midfielders were pretty much the same as me - we were given time on the ball, and in this heat, it's hard to close people down the way you would (in England)."

EXPERIENCE

THE WORLD GAME

THIS SUNDAY AT

BELMORE!

UTS SYDNEY OLYMPIC

VERSUS

GIPPSLAND FALCONS

Come and watch your local team, UTS Sydney Olympic, as they battle for the National Soccer League title. The Olympic boys boast Australia's best attack and defence and sit on top of the league ladder. That's because they play the world game the way it should be played - with plenty of skill and passion!

SEE YOU AT THE HOME OF SOCCER- Belmore Sports Ground.

FOR THE BEST SPORTING VALUE IN TOWN JOIN US ON THE OLYMPIC FAMILY HILL

At ONLY \$5 per adult you can't go wrong! Children under 13 years are admitted FREE!

FUN, RELAXED ATMOSPHERE. SUPER VALUE. Footy you'll talk about all week. BE THERE!

GATES OPEN AT 3PM

1st Game: Sydney Olympic Youth Team Vs AIS Youth Team Kick off 4.00pm

Main Game: UTS Sydney Olympic Vs Gippsland Falcons Kick Off 6.30pm

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE GROUND

Family Hill: Adults \$5

Grandstand Side: Adults \$15, Concession \$10, Children \$5.

Children under 13 years admitted FREE (all areas)



GREG BLAKE
C7 SOCCER COMMENTATOR
grblake@primus.com.au



Damian Mori, you little bobby-dazzler. The best all-time goalscorer over the past 24 NSL seasons? Obviously subjective, although I doubt it.

But you can't argue with the numbers, and after last Friday night's double strike against Sydney United 'Frogga' reigns supreme as the most prolific goalscorer in competition history.

His historic 138th all-time NSL goal barely rated a mention in even some devoted soccer publications; which is an absolute bloody disgrace, as was the lack of publicity for such a wonderful event.

Both Mori's club and the league itself should be held accountable for being almost pitifully impotent bystanders during Mori's inexorable march to greatness.

Soc.Aus. chairman, Basil Scarcella, got it absolutely wrong when he deflected any blame for the lack of publicity in the build-up by saying it was ultimately the responsibility of Mori's club.

Complete crap.

Basil's a native Croweater, thus he would be as aware as anyone that Adelaide Force's publicity machine has been in reverse gear since the departure of Ned Coton.

For goodness sakes, *Inside Soccer* hasn't seen so much as a single fax from the Force in months. Not even one concerning Mori's record!

Relying on Adelaide Force to conjure up what should have been a national publicity campaign to promote what is likely to be the club's one and only success this year is as about as sensible as leaving your pet dog do your income tax return.

Suffice to say that the Adelaide club disgraced itself and one of its most famous sons.

As the governing body, Soc.Aus. should have had the nads to step in and

slap Force's administration out of their lethargy and both bodies combined to toss the public a bone on this one.

Pathetic stuff all around, but leave us not sully the moment too much.

But regardless, as of last Friday Mori is now our version of Mick Cronin; the NSL's equivalent of Tony Lockett; taking over the mantle from the irrepressible Rod Brown, who retired a couple of years back with a 137 goal career.

This is a monstrous achievement for a young man who wasn't even acknowledged as a genuine goalscorer before moving from his native Melbourne to link up with Adelaide City, for the summer of 1992/93.

The names and the faces, they come and they go and after being fascinated by this league for two decades I've probably forgotten more players than I recall.

Had Mori not have kept developing into the chrome-plated champion he has become, I probably would not have recalled him easily.

A spindly speedster with a shock of long blond hair when he debuted for South Melbourne in 1989, he did plenty of running around and showed some rare flashes of potential, but generally Mori just loped about and looked like a stray dog chasing cars on the freeway back then.

After spending more time on the bench than on the paddock in two years at Middle Park he moved on to struggle street at Sunshine George Cross for a season before joining the Melbourne Knights for one summer, where we got regular glimpses of his potential for the first time.

Lightning fast and with a venomous shot, Mori fired home 11 goals in the Knights' failed 1991/92 grand final campaign; a fair haul for a still unrecognised front-man and enough to more than dou-



Damian Mori: will go down in Australian football history as being one of the very best of the 21st century, and even beyond?

ble his career total of a modest 20 goals in some 83 NSL appearances to that point.

And he also did enough that year to fire the imagination of Adelaide Force's canny dual-championship winning boss, Zoran Matic, who lured Mori west and the rest of the story is quickly becoming legend.

Mind you, it even took Matic half a season to decide just how best to utilise 'Frogga', but by the time a tense 1993/94 grand final against his former Knights teammates had been decided by one of Mori's now trademark yet always breathtaking run-and-gun solo goals - the only score of the game - he was Matic's next link in the wonderful Steve Maxwell and Carl Veart lineage.

And hasn't the boy kicked on, with interest.

After last weekend Mori ranks top three in every statistical category pertaining to the NSL's current list of ten goalscoring centuries.

He now heads Brown and John Kosmina in total goals scored; his current goals-per-game average of 0.48 squeezes him in second behind Frank Farina (0.495) and ahead of Kosmina (0.46); his 217 games to reach the 100 milestone puts him third behind Farina (182) and Kosmina (198) on games to reach the century and, when he hit the ton at 27-years of age, he just edged past Kosmina as the competition's youngest player to reach such a lofty career mark.

His list of records is staggering; quickest-ever 50 goals (57 games), quickest goal in a league game (3.7 seconds), most consecutive games scored in (7), most goals in a regular season (31), most goals for one NSL club (118), to name just a handful.

And now he owns the big one.

Good luck to him and as good an answer as any dead-set champion could offer to those bloody drongos around the country who still don't rate him - especially those bizarre clowns amongst the crowd at Force games who clearly don't deserve you, 'Frogga'.

At 29 now, I believe Mori is at the tail end of his career and his figures will start to decline markedly within two or three years.

My editor, sagely Aidan Ormond, believes Mori could play on as success-

fully as he has done as a 15 goals-plus per season striker for another five years and set an NSL goalscoring mark unlikely to ever be broken.

As superbly fit as he is, Mori's is very much a power-based game; explosive bursts off a standing start; electrifying speed and a thunderous shot.

Even a champion cannot stave off the effects of ageing, and making it harder still is the fact that his team is going through a huge transitional period and Mori's opportunities will diminish if Adelaide struggles a bit for a year or two.

Thus I appreciate every opportunity I get to watch Mori play these days, while he is still somewhere near his peak.

Brown was a classical goal-poacher, whose guile and anticipation served him well as he hit the veteran class and soldiered on to the record over some 347 games.

Kosmina had few actual weaknesses but his real strength came from a tenacity and intensely driven competitive nature which almost dared opponents to try and deny him a goal.

In his prime Farina could make your heart sing; he was champagne.

Mori is rarely exceptional in any category but he's been very good very consistently for a very long time and he can blow a game apart in a heartbeat.

He's a wonderful young man, a fine athlete and statistically the best that ever was at this level.

Club and country might have let the occasion pass with little fuss, but at 'Inside Soccer' we do care enough about the significance of the contributions every player and coach makes to our rich but often unrecognised NSL history, thus we will be making a special presentation to him to say, well, good onya, champ.

And if you really love the game, get off your backsides when next he's playing at your club's stadium next; stand up and afford him a champion's welcome.

True perspective on historical events is almost invariably evaluated with hindsight.

It probably won't be until long after the day Damian Mori bows out of senior footy that we'll look back and realise just how good he actually was.

grblake@primus.com.au

MELBOURNE SPORTS BOOKS New Soccer Books and Videos

Neill Ruddock	\$45
Dwight Yorke	\$50
Andy Cole	\$50
Peter Schmeichel	\$50
Barcelona FC History Book	\$50
Paul Merson	\$50
Access All Areas: Manchester United	\$50
Bobby Robson	\$20
Michael Owen's Soccer Skills Book	\$25
Ronaldo	\$45
Alex Ferguson: My Life	\$50
Robbie Slater: The Hard Way	\$25
Australian NSL History	\$10
Kevin Keegan: new book	\$17
Michael Owen: two new books	\$25/50
Studs Up Fanzine Jan 2000	\$3
David Beckham: My Story	\$35
Frank Farina: My World Is Round	\$25
Tony Adams: Addicted	\$20s/back \$50h/back
George Best: Bestie	\$20
Dennis Wise: new book	\$50
European Football Year Book 99/2000 Edition	\$75
Jan Molby: new book	\$25
Bill Bremner: new book	\$35
John Aldridge - My Story	\$20
Manslaughter Utd - A Year With A Prison Football Team	\$30
Johan Cruyff: new book	\$30
Rough Guide Series - European Football 99/2000	\$38
Rough Guide Series - English Football 99/2000	\$38

9 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne,
Vic, 3000
Phone:

(03)
9621 1211
and phone/fax
(03)
9621 1383

All credit cards, cheques/money orders
accepted.
Add \$8 for postage and
handling in Australia

shop open
9.15am to 5.15pm
Monday
to Saturday

Web site:
www.melsportsbooks.com.au
E-mail:
santocaruso@primus.com.au

IEC's deal with SA

"We want to invest in Australian Soccer," says Mariani

By Greg Blake

Bertie Mariani still manages to sidestep even the vaguest suggestions of scepticism with the same almost casual aplomb with which he used to deal with any criticism directed at the teams he coached with such success.

"I don't think anyone has been particularly sceptical, has there?" questions the more recognisable public face of Aussie soccer's newest big player, the Sydney-based International Entertainment Corporation.

"No, I think the whole thing has been quite well received."

Smooth as silk really, not even pausing to acknowledge the quiet chuckles of those quite unconvinced of either the business credentials of IEC or the quite spectacular numbers touted as being the annual amount his company might invest in Australian Soccer.

Although you'd expect nothing less from Mariani, who developed his media savvy more than a decade ago when he became the youngest grand final-winning coach in NSL history and perfected his skills as an on-air television presenter several years later.

Along with business partner and passionate soccer devotee, SBS Television's Domenic Galati, IEC has stormed onto the domestic scene after clinching a three-year plus one-year option deal to market the game at both international and club level.

Mariani and Galati, both heavily

involved in the Rene Rivkin group's promotion of last year's Manchester United tour, have already speculated on a possible annual \$20 million investment in the local game.

The figure is staggering, but Mariani doesn't waver in his company's commitment to soccer.

"We believe in the game and we believe in the investment we are making in it," he says.

"And I believe we can ensure its success in what will be a hands-on, working partnership with Soccer Australia."

"Certainly from my point of view this is a commercial investment and we are going to do what we have to make it work."

"We will work closely with Soccer Australia on the Socceroos, Olyroos and the NSL and right now we are just looking forward to the rest of this year and towards the Olympic Games."

"With Soccer Australia looking towards revamping the NSL I'd say there will be plenty happening in the near future."

The IEC deal with Soc. Aus. took near 12 months to negotiate and finalise, with the game's governing body no doubt thrilled at the immediate dividends of capital for the NSL.

"It's two pronged," explained Soc.Aus. chairman, Basil Scarsella.

"There will be \$1.4 million for the NSL in the first year, \$1.5 in the second year and it increases to \$2 million after that, to find the naming rights for the NSL."

"The agreement has a split with them and us if it over the \$1.4 million."

"It is \$1.1 million for them to have the rights to Socceroo games, that is to bring teams out for us to play."

"We have bank guarantees from a blue chip multi-national and we have the money up-front for the first 12 months."

"Added to that, both Mariani and Galati have experience in the media and entertainment industries."

While it is somewhat comforting to know that the marketing of footy will finally be placed into the hands of such footy specialists as Mariani and Galati, Mariani says his involvement as a business person governed the decision-making process to pursue the deal.

"I think it's incidental that I've been involved in the game for a while," said the dual championship-winning former Marconi Stallions coach.

"Like any player, if someone allows you to turn professional obviously you're going to be happy to earn a living from the game."

"But even though both Domenic - who is an avid supporter of the game - and I have been around the game the reality is that we are investing a huge amount of time and money into this."

Long-time local soccer devotees have been astounded at the figures IEC has suggested it may invest annually in the game.

Even Mariani has chuckled at the number of people who have asked him if he \$20 million or more mentioned in media dispatches might be merely the result of some typographical error.

"It's not; that figure is certainly not far

from the truth," says Mariani, who played in excess of 150 NSL games at Marconi and Apia Leichhardt before coaching Marconi, Sydney Olympic and Wollongong City with various degrees of success.

"For starters, we are looking to organise at least two tournaments a year here for the Socceroos, involving teams ranked in the top 15 or 16 in the world."

"Straight away you can look at that costing \$10 million or more."

• "But again, we believe in the investment in the product."

"Manchester United was the first step and I believe that if you bring top quality to Australia people will come to it."

Both IEC and Soccer Australia have made it clear the running of the game is still firmly in the grasp of the governing body, although both parties have a pretty firm mutual conviction on the course of the immediate future of the code here.

"Our involvement is pretty clear," Mariani explained.

"For example, IEC has the marketing rights for the NSL, which basically entails sourcing sponsorship for the league at various levels; naming rights and finals sponsors for example."

"Obviously Soccer Australia runs the game, but probably over 12 months of discussions with them we agree on the directions for the future of the game."

"The immediate goals, they would be an Olyroo medal, making the next World Cup and turning the domestic competition into one which gains a greater degree of mainstream acceptance."

The Spirit

versus

Marconi

Proudly presented by
Alitalia & KLM



northern
spirit
i.e.

www.northernspirit.com.au

Real
Passion.
True Spirit.



North Sydney Oval

Friday Night



CredeX



7.30pm Friday Night
10 March 2000
Tickets @ Ticketek
9266 4800 or rock
up to the gate
after 5pm

Half-time -
Volvo Shootout
& Mini Soccer

LEGSNOR0042-15

Love what you do

By Aidan Ormond

Matt Bingley says, "you gotta love the game ... money shouldn't matter." I guess with all that's happened with his club, Northern Spirit, and the PFA, plus the faltering fortunes of Sydney's boom club, it's an apt sentiment at this point.

"At the end of the day we know what our job is and we must go out and get the results as players. As a dispute it (the PFA) shouldn't have gone as far as it did. It could have been resolved earlier," he said.

"If I didn't have the drive and motivation I'd be playing for the wrong reasons."

After returning from Japan last season, Bingley's form at the back has been supreme, with Soccerroo selection the reward this season.

Hence his injury - which precluded him from the Chile tour - could not have come at a worse time.

"The eight weeks before my injury I've probably hit some form. The team playing better helped although it has been an up and down year for us.

"Yeah, something happened in the game before the Chile tour left," Bingley explained. "I didn't even know how I did it. It felt tender at half-time so I told them give me ten minutes. I don't normally walk off so they knew it was something fairly serious.

"Luke (Casserly) took his chance with the Soccerroos and good luck to him," he said without a trace of bitterness.

"I don't think I have slowed down," said the 28-year-old former

striker.

"At the back you do less running insofar as when I played as a striker there were a lot of sacrificing runs that had to be made. At the back you can be selective; you're doing a lot of covering runs which is easier because you can see the play."

Bingley started playing in the western suburbs of Sydney with Merrylands. The world game has taken him to England, Sweden, Japan, and, has seen him capped at three levels for Australia.

His ambitions still fire him.

"My next goal is the Soccerroos," he said firmly. "So I have to get fit again and find some form. I don't think," he paused for thought "it hampers my chances if I am playing here or overseas"

Full-time football at Spirit has followed on from an eye-opening spell of professional footy in Japan, which has some wonderful benefits for his career, yet he candidly admitted he was somewhat lonely at times.

"Obviously it came up when I was having problems getting a work permit in Europe (he trialed with London clubs in the early 90s before spending four months in Sweden prior to his Marconi stint.)

"It (the J-League) was the first time I saw full-time professionalism. I also had various Euro coaches, so I got to see and experience different ways, plus the Japanese people were very good to me.

"With money you can have people on hand all the time. Kobe was a good set up with two of the best training grounds in the league, with JEF Utd not far behind.



"They were so fit which helped me. When I first came back from Japan I realized that I was fitter than the guys here. You really notice it," he mused.

However the Asian wish to rote learn - an aspect noted by Andy Harper of his Chinese experiences - can let them down at critical times.

"Japan did very well against Argentina at France 98. The Japanese mentality however causes them problems.

"At training you get taught drills and they tend to do it to a tee. They aren't really off the cuff. It's probably the only thing they lack in a game situation.

"Technically they are up there with the best, and the physical side too. It's just the mental side of it.

"Japan is so Americanized so it was not such a problem living there. The players generally spoke English but I didn't mind going home and just unwinding on my own. Obviously it got a little lonely at times.

"I guess it was just the little things. It would have been nice if someone just dropped by every now and then."

Bingley is hopeful of playing against his old club Marconi this Friday night. "I am really looking forward to this one. I just hope I am fit."

DIRTY HARRY?



PLAYERS WITH MOST CARDS (7 CARDS OR MORE)

NAME	TEAM	G	Y	R	T
HARRY JAMES	CANB	19	8	1	9
Andy Vargas	Gpsl	19	8	0	8
Gabriel Mendez	SOly	20	8	0	8
Nick Meredith	BSr	17	7	1	8
Vince Savoca	SUtd	18	7	1	8
Walter Ardore	PPwr	14	5	2	7
Danny Burt	Canb	16	8	0	7
Dean Fak	Gpsl	19	7	0	7
Manny Gots	Gpsl	20	6	1	7
Jamie Hamwell	PGry	19	7	0	7
Chris Jackson	Kngz	16	7	0	7
Robert Liparoti	SHM	17	6	1	7
Goran Lozanovski	SHM	14	6	1	7
Darren McDonald	Marc	14	7	0	7
Claudio Paboi	AdC	15	7	0	7

CLUB SUMMARY 1999/2000 (Includes round 24)

Pos.	Club	Y	R
1	STHM	64	6
2	SOly	56	4
3	Canb	53	6
4	Marc	52	6
5	WWol	50	4
6	Kngz	49	5
7	MKn	46	7
8	PPwr	50	5
9	SUtd	46	5
10	AdC	45	3
11	Gpsl	48	3
12	BSr	44	2
13	PGry	39	5
14	NSpr	34	3
15	Newc	33	1
16	Carl	29	4
TOTAL		738	69

TYPE	HOME	AWAY	TOTAL
yellows	330	408	738
reds	22	47	69
TOTAL	352	455	807

REFEREES: "IT'S A BREEZE FOR MATT!"

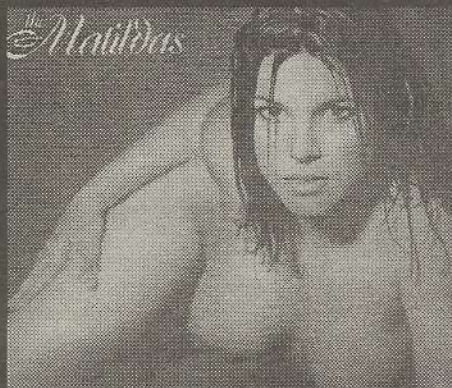
REF	G	Y	R	Aver
1 MATT BREEZE	24	95	13	4.50
2 Gary Connolly	21	51	7	2.80
3 Simon Micallef	21	84	5	4.24
4 Con Dimes	20	90	7	4.85
5 Brett Hugo	19	79	10	4.68
6 Eddie Lennie	19	88	4	4.84
7 Mark Shield	19	86	7	4.89
8 David Dwight	12	43	3	3.80
9 Jeremy Blaney	12	30	3	2.75
10 Wayne Dade	6	33	2	5.80
11 Derek Rugg	6	22	6	4.67
12 Pary Mur	5	11	1	2.40
13 Brian Precious	4	21	1	5.50
14 Craig Zeller	1	4	0	4.00

www.worldfootball.com.au

presents

The Global Edition of the Matildas Calendar And you can win it!!

Answer the question below then cut out this ad and send it to INSIDE SOCCER PO BOX 3889 PARRAMATTA 2124. You can send in as many times as you like but no photocopies accepted. There will be **two copies** to be given away for lucky readers (these prizes are the Global edition of the Matildas Calendar, which have extra pics in them!). The winners will be drawn on March 13 and winners printed in March 14 issue of Inside Soccer.



Question: Which African nation is due to play the Matildas in March?

Answer:

Name:

Address:

Andy Roberts is ... 'The General' And he's dressed for success



By Aidan Ormond

Andy Roberts would have been a home-based Soccerroo if he had played for a city side in the 90s. There, I've said it. He even had a Porsche, so fitting in with the glamour boys of the national team would have been a breeze!

As it turned out, Roberts stuck by his hometown club, the modest Newcastle Breakers, happy in the knowledge that he was playing for the club he supported so passionately as a kid.

For this bloke, Newcastle - his city - means the world.

Therefore, success for the man they call 'The General' is subjective. And sticking by his side through the struggling 90s has finally paid off.

These last two seasons Newcastle has shrugged off the tag of regional lightweights and is currently a genuine top six contender.

Perhaps even a top two spot?

And Roberts' success has parallels for the regional sides of Australia, who, it should be said, are doing wonderfully well (Wollongong is a good example.)

Even clubs like Gippsland are seeking inspiration from clubs like Newcastle as the Victorians strive to become that state's regional football force.

"I had a season pass and used to go and sit in those huge crowds at the International Sports Centre and see players like Kenny Boden and Alf Stamp. I also saw Craig Johnson and Bobby Charlton play.

"It was then that I said 'I want to play for Newcastle in the NSL,'" he recalled.

Roberts however had a season with Branko Culina and Cosmos in 97/98 (the only season away from Newcastle.)

"Branko was well-respected after what he did with Sydney United, but Newcastle is where my heart is and I am proud to play for Newcastle.

"In hindsight I should have followed my soccer career further after the AIS. My side had players like Ned Zelic, Dominic Longo, Andy Petterson and Shaun Murphy, who went overseas and really succeeded.

"The AIS with Ron Smith as coach was hard work," he mused. "But I made some lifelong friends.

"Anyway I decided to return to Newcastle and play for Austral United.

"I did that for two seasons before joining Newcastle Breakers in 1991 for the start of their NSL years. Apart from that one year at Canberra (97/98) I've been here since day one."

The former Northern NSW junior representative's never-say-die and competitive nature - utilized this year in a sometime man-marking role or as a midfielder - is one of the keys to his longevity with Breakers.

"During the dark days in the early and mid-90s of course you question what you are doing here (at Newcastle), but I am a very competitive person so I kept battling away.

"When Kossie (John Kosmina) was here I was probably not in his plans. I left with my wife to play and live in Canberra. It rejuvenated my career because coach Lee Sterrey asked me back and it's been all up since then.

"Hopefully I will be around long enough to see full-time professionalism at Newcastle," said the versatile Breaker.

Certainly with the success of the Breakers the public profile of the players - Roberts included - has increased in Newcastle. 'The General' now gets to sign autographs in the street just as local Rugby League legend 'The Chief' Paul Harragon does.

"The Newcastle crowd is passionate. They love their football and the city is the birthplace of football ... and everyone loves a winner."

Which is why Lee Sterrey is highly regarded by Roberts and the fans. "Lee is quite a likeable character who is well-respected. He is a hard taskmaster yet the boys will try that bit harder for him.

"Sterrey is also a very tactically aware coach, in fact he is one of the most astute coaches I've had in the NSL."

But when asked about Newcastle's system Roberts demurred, reluctant not to give away too many trade secrets with the league in its final home-and-away stages.

"We're very well organized I can tell you that! Without giving away too much, we play a 4-4-2. We like to get men behind the ball and hit sides on the break with the pace of Buonavoglia and Harper upfront ideal for the counter-attack.

"The midfielders are sharp and quick

who run off the strikers. We set the trap. We don't mind if the opposition have the ball in their back third, they can't cause us damage there. We just wait to pounce and swoop on their mistakes."

It is also believed that the Breakers dressing room is full of motivational aphorisms designed to reinforce the message that the side, as a whole, has a responsibility to fight as a unit.

The results have lifted Newcastle to the top of the league on at least one occasion this season, prompting a re-evaluation of how the side can be viewed.

"Actually Lee Sterrey, as a metaphor now calls Newcastle Breakers a Volkswagen with a sunroof with the Marconis of the world a Rolls Royce."

Which is pretty apt given Roberts himself has been driving a Volksy himself.

"Originally I had a Porsche. Four years ago when I met my wife Margarite I sold it and got a poor man's Porsche, a Volkswagen Beetle! And now I have a brand new Volkswagen."

To pay for his cars Roberts fits his Breakers training and playing schedule around full-time work as a salesman at 'Gentleman's Outfitter' in Newcastle, "a highly reputable menswear store!" added Roberts, ever the salesman.

"My boss is pretty lenient and flexible with my soccer commitments. They see my profile in Newcastle as a plus for the store ... I have a good rapport with the customers and working full-time is something I have always done.

"Of course I would love to play full-time. Who wouldn't, but at this stage with a mortgage I have to work," he noted without any hint of bitterness.

"I am a pretty honest person," he said about his sales technique.

It is conjecture of course, but if Roberts had played full-time who knows how far he could have gone?

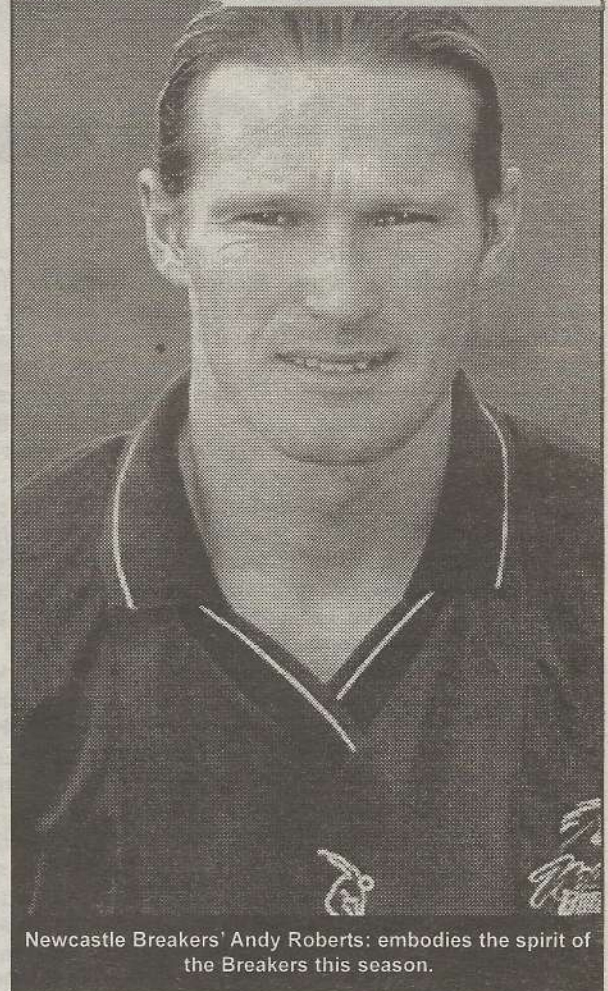
Just on the ponytail and Roberts draws on world history to explain it. "It goes back to Biblical times and Greek mythology of Hercules," he laughed. "It gives you strength. If you cut off the hair you lose your power!"

His employers at Gentlemen's Outfitters describe him as a "sincere person who is conscientious ... and the girls love the ponytail!"

Just on the ponytail and Roberts draws on world history to explain it. "It goes back to Biblical times and Greek mythology of Hercules," he laughed. "It gives you strength. If you cut off the hair you lose your power!"

Dave Cervinski in Wollongong, PJ Roberts in Canberra and Ivan Vichelich at Kingz. Mmm ... maybe he has got a point!

Margarite Roberts, his wife of four years (together for nine), is apparently the inspiration behind Roberts' ponytail look.



Newcastle Breakers' Andy Roberts: embodies the spirit of the Breakers this season.



'The General' Andy Roberts tussles with Melbourne Knights' Vassallo earlier this season.

Traditionally disrespected by the big cities' media and fans, yet happy to toil away in virtual anonymity - it can be a hard life for an NSL footy player from these satellite centres.

Which, as it turns out, is just the way Roberts - an engaging and likeable 29-year-old - likes it.

"Yeah, we don't mind," he said of the tag as regional write-offs. "It takes the focus and pressure off us."

After a one-year scholarship with the AIS in 1988 and Young Soccerroos selection ten years ago, Roberts takes enormous pride in seeing his side succeed like no other Hunter region flagship side.

The fact that he has been front and centre of the Sterrey-led Breakers revival is just the icing on the cake.

"I was about nine or ten when the Breakers were originally in the NSL as Newcastle KB United," he reminisced.

"He's very reserved and quiet. When I first met him he was very clean cut but now with the long hair," she giggled, "he looks like the guy from the Solo commercial!"

"He loves playing for his city," 'The General's' wife added. "Canberra was an experience but we were anxious to get home. If however he got an offer from a big city club then obviously we would think about it.

"If it was Milan I'd be packing his bags immediately!" she said of the man she termed a gentle giant.

"At the end of the day everyone thinks about money, and also the opportunities when you're at a bigger club. Look at Troy Halpin and Clayton Zane.

"Everyone loves a winner and so it's great to see 7,000 plus fans at Breakers' games ... in the past we were practically sitting there on our own."

Roberts' title aspirations are what keep him going - and finals football will no doubt bring the best out in him and the rest of the first-time finals players at Birmingham Gardens. Although nothing is being taken for granted.

"The title is the Holy Grail. We take it a game at a time. Our goal is to make the finals, first and foremost. After that there is finals footy."

"If we got to the Grand Final this city will go berserk," he said.

"When the Newcastle Knights were in the Grand Final in Rugby League I will always remember how Newcastle got behind them. Hopefully if we made the Grand Final it would be the same for us."

While conceding that his side lacks finals experience Roberts is hopeful that the Breakers' strength in preparedness and planning will stand them in good stead.

It would certainly be good for NSL footy to have fresh names from regional centres such as Newcastle and Wollongong competing for the ultimate prize.

And as Lee Sterrey says, "if 'The General' can do the job for us, we're halfway there."

AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

Bosnich on the outer at United?

Mark Bosnich is again having his problems with Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson. He was missing from the United line-up mid-week as the European Champions Cup battles resumed as United beat Bordeaux 2-0 at home.

He was also absent from United's 1-1 home draw with Liverpool in the Premier League game on the weekend.

Ferguson seems to be mainly concerned with Bosnich's weakness in clearing the ball with his feet, an integral part of the game under the backpass law. The United supremo is, apparently, again eyeing a Serie A 'keeper, even after the disaster that was Massimo Taibi. Gianluigi Buffon is one of the likely targets.

In other Champions Cup games Paul Okon was missing from Fiorentina's 1-0 home win over Spain's Valencia as was Joe Simunic from Hertha Berlin's 1-1 home draw with Sparta Prague.

Okon was more fortunate on the weekend as he came onto the field in the 71st minute as Fiorentina beat Piacenza 2-1 at home.

In UEFA Cup games Harry Kewell had a full game for Leeds United as they battled to a 0-0 draw away to Roma. Although Leeds were on the defensive for a lot of the game it was Kewell who had the best chances for the visitors. His 30-metre free-kick curled narrowly wide off the Roma post.

Kewell early in the game broke the home defence after 30 minutes but

dragged his shot wide under pressure from a tackle. He had another crack at goal with a drive that went just wide after 49 minutes.

In the Premier League on the weekend Kewell spearheaded his title chasing team as they beat Coventry 3-0 at home.

Kewell scored the first goal with a 25 yard free-kick piledriver.

In other Premier League games Richard Johnson made a comeback to the Watford team as a substitute for the start of the second half as his doomed team suffered another 1-2 home loss to West Ham.

Mark Schwarzer was in goals for Middlesbrough as they struggled to a 1-1 draw with Southampton to slowly drag themselves away from the relegation zone, although they are not out of danger just yet.

In the Scottish Premier League Rangers seem to be struggling somewhat lately and could only manage a 0-0 home draw with St Johnstone on the weekend. Tony Vidmar played a full game while Craig Moore was serving the second match of his suspension.

In a midweek game Celtic hit goalscoring form with a 6-2 home win over Dundee. Mark Viduka continued his phenomenal scoring record with another two, one being a penalty. In Celtic's weekend game against Hibernian, which they lost, Viduka was again on the scoreboard with a goal in the 73rd minute.

In the Nationwide Division One

weekend action the most prominent Aussie was Frank Talia who made three blunders that saw his team, Swindon lose 3-1 away to Nottingham Forest. Talia had made some superb saves early on but then was responsible for all three Forest goals as Swindon's loss all but doomed them to the Third Division.

Jason Kearton was also in goal as Crewe Alexander beat Norwich 1-0 at home and kept themselves hanging onto Division status in 19th position but only two points away from the relegation zone.

In the 1-1 draw between Crystal Palace and Manchester City Danny Tiatto played the full game for the visitors, City, while Nick Rizzo, after being a starter the previous week, was back on the bench where he remained for the duration of the game.

Kevin Muscat played a full game as Wolverhampton Wanderers went down 2-0 away to Huddersfield but fellow Aussie Steve Corica stayed on the bench for the whole game.

In Portsmouth's 0-1 away win over Ipswich, which kept in third from bottom spot and big danger of relegation, Mike Panopoulos was in the squad but did not see any action on the field.

Stan Lazaridis is back playing at his best as his Birmingham City side established themselves as firm favourites for one the play-off spots with a 0-3 away thrashing of West Bromwich Albion.

Lazaridis played a full game for the first time since his return from injury while Lazaridis' West Brom counterpart left wing-back was fellow Aussie Jason Van Blerk, who also played the full game.

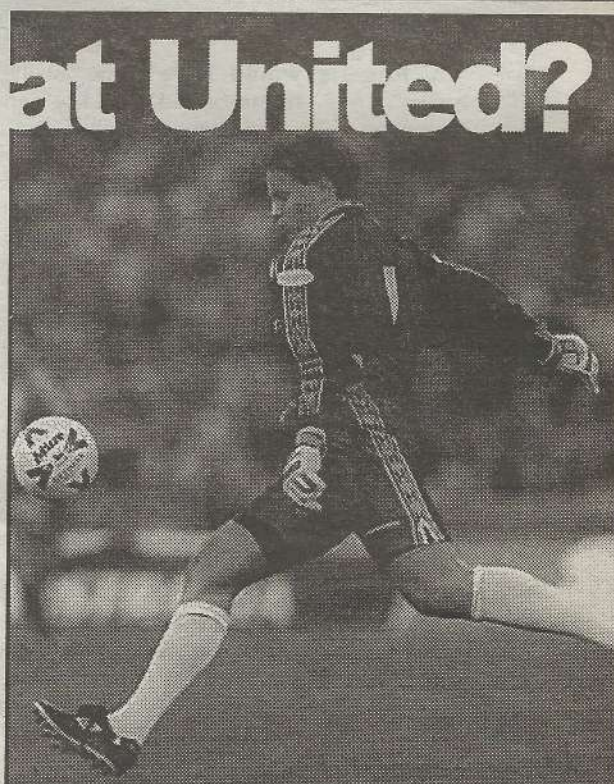
Shaun Murphy was part of the Sheffield United team that drew 1-1 at home to QPR.

In the Nationwide Division Two, Millwall continued their impressive run with a 4-1 drubbing of Bristol City and moved into third spot only four points from the lead, although they have played two games more than the teams above them.

'Wannabe Aussie' Tim Cahill (he played for Western Samoa in a World Youth qualifier as a 14-year old and is now having trouble convincing FIFA that he should be eligible for Australia) had a great game and scored two goals while Lucas Neill also played a full game.

Danny Allsopp's recent move down a division to Wrexham seems to have worked a treat as he again scored as his team won 1-0 at home to Luton.

Meanwhile, in the FA Youth Cup Middlesbrough youth team had advanced to the semi-final when it defeated Newcastle



Mark Bosnich ... his kicking problem is causing concern to his Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson.

United 2-1 last week. For Middlesbrough, which is also interested in Paul Okon, featured two Aussies youngsters, goalkeeper Brad Jones and midfielder and the scorer of one of the goals, Luke Wilkshire.

The two youngsters are set to follow in the footsteps of another duo of Aussies, Richard Garcia, brother of Michael, and Michael Ferrante, who starred in West Ham youth team's run in the FA Cup last year.

In Germany it was a good week for three Aussies - the 1860 Munchen duo of Ned Zelic and Paul Agostino featured in their team's exciting 4-3 home win over Hansa Rostock. Zelic again played his favourite position of sweeper while Agostino started the game for the second week in a row and, on this occasion, played the full game. Although Agostino didn't score his striking partner scored a hat-trick.

Joe Simunic is still recovering from injury and was absent from Hertha Berlin's 2-1 home win over Unterhaching while David Zdrilic was similarly indisposed for his team Ulm.

As reported last week, Frank Juric made his debut for second placed Bayer Leverkusen and this week he was again in goals as Leverkusen won 1-3 away to Kaiserslautern to edged closer to the first placed Bayern.

In Holland, new dad Zeljko Kalac was in his usual spot in Roda JC's 3-1 home win over bottom placed Cambuur Leeuwarden - Roda is sitting in a comfortable 9th spot in the Dutch First Division.

Josip Skoko has made a tremendous start to his new career in Belgium following his first goal when coming on as a substitute in his first game with a man of the match performance in his second game last week.

In Serie B Vince Grella was a starter for Ternana but was replaced in the 61st minute as his team went down 0-1 at home to Sampdoria.

On the other hand, Marco Bresciano didn't take the field at all, although he was in the squad, for Empoli as they beat Vicenza 2-1 at home.

In the Croatian First Division Ante Milicic came on in the 90th minute in Rijeka's 2-0 home win.

ERNIE TAPAI RETIRES TO PURSUE COACHING

By Scott O'Donnell

The 2000 S-League season will mark the end of Socceroo Ernie Tapai's playing career. Tapai announced earlier this week that he will be hanging up his boots at the end of the season to return home to Australia. He cited being away from his family as the main reason, but also stated that he wanted to start his coaching career.

Tapai and his team, Home United have been competing in the inaugural "Toyota Challenge Champions Invitational Cup 2000" currently being held in Brunei.

There are six teams competing in two groups. Home United were grouped with Thai Farmers Bank (Thailand) and Happy Valley (Hong Kong).

In the other group, the home side Brunei were grouped with Malaysian champions, Pahang, and Persija (Indonesia).

Home United have not performed as well as expected. In their first encounter, they drew 0-0 with Thai Farmers Bank. Although they dominated the game, the team from Singapore were unable to score the vital goal.

In their second game, Home went down 2-0 to Happy Valley. With Happy Valley defeating Thai Farmers Bank 2-1, means that Home will be returning to Singapore earlier than expected.

Meanwhile, back in Singapore, Darren

Stewart's Balestier Central have lost a couple of their rising stars who had served them well last year. Once again, Balestier will have to rely on their youngsters to see them through the season as they have made no new major signings. Stewart will once again lead the side and will certainly have his work cut out for him if results in recent friendly games are anything to go by.

Tony Carbone's team, Marine Castle have signed two Koreans, but like the previous two seasons, will almost certainly be fighting to avoid the wooden spoon.

Geylang United, with new striker, Brian Bothwell in good pre-season form will be one of the favourites for the title this year. Alan Vest has signed a number of good local players, and if their foreign players can avoid injury and suspension, Geylang will go very close to winning their second S-League title.

With just one week before the kick-off of the S-League, two more Australians have been signed. Former Sydney United defender, Mirko Jurilj has returned to Singapore to play for Sembawang Rangers while former Olyroo and Perth Glory midfielder, Michael Garcia has joined Marine Castle.

In Malaysia, Steve Darby is still at the helm of last year's Premier II champions Johor. Johor, now in Premier I are looking to strengthen their side in order to cope with the jump in divisions.



Southern Sharks

NSL footy for Southern Sydney?

By Aidan Ormond

Six months after Adelaide Sharks' signominious exit from the NSL another Shark has surfaced. This one, the Southern Sharks, however has a decidedly more stable and potentially exciting look about it.

Last Friday at Sharks International - the leagues club adjacent to Cronulla Sharks Rugby League ground Toyota Park - the consortium charged with bringing NSL football to southern Sydney outlined their case to the assembled media and guests.

Consortium shareholder Ivo Favotto felt the Sutherland area deserved to be represented at national level.

"This region is the biggest junior nursery in NSW. It is a community-based bid with the support of the various soccer and sporting associations.

"This area has one million people to draw on and, put simply, with the popularity of soccer in the area there should be an NSL side representing this community."

The Sharks have about 25,000 juniors to target from the various junior associations close by. In the Sutherland Shire alone 13,500 players sign up every winter to play soccer, including a booming women's participation rate.

Both the Sutherland Shire Junior

Soccer Association and the St George Junior Soccer Association would be given seats on the Sharks' board. The bid was also keen to explain that the club would be run by soccer people.

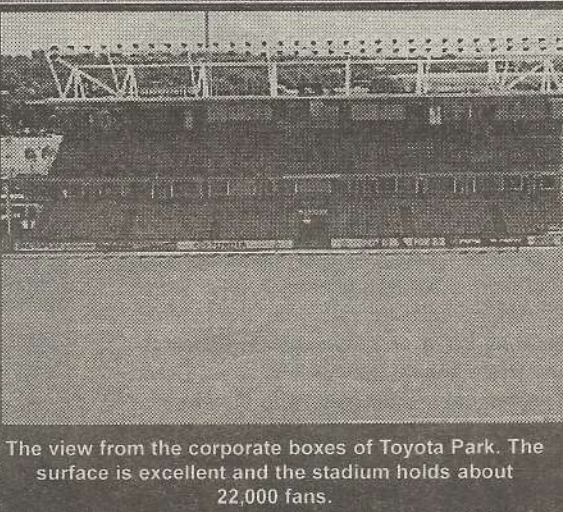
Chris Downy - on behalf of the Sharks - said "they had to have a go" regarding their NSL aspirations.

"Southern Sydney is the sporting powerhouse of Sydney. We do well in a whole range of sports," said the former Minister for Sport.

The St George and Sutherland areas of Sydney has a rich tradition of producing NSL and national team stars, such as Paul Henderson (Spirit), Jacob Burns (Power) and John Buonavoglia (Breakers), to name just three.

The Sharks hope to play on Friday nights, with crowds of up to 8,000 growing to 15,000 being their estimate. The ground is a wonderful viewing facility located about 40 minutes drive from its nearest NSL clubs Sydney Olympic and Northern Spirit.

The bid's strong points are that it is a club that will draw on a large region hitherto starved of NSL football. The game is also booming in this part of Sydney.



The view from the corporate boxes of Toyota Park. The surface is excellent and the stadium holds about 22,000 fans.

Further, Toyota Park is magnificent facility perfect for the world game.

On its own this would appear, at first look, to be an interesting bid worthy of consideration.

Drawing together a sellable business and marketing plan and gaining admission to the NSL will, however, be the hard part.

Given the current indecision on the number of clubs in the NSL - and the fact that a reduced number seems inevitable - it won't be easy.

The Southern Sharks however are determined to succeed and be there on the starting blocks later this year.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

".. something the hard-working wingback had done with gay abandon."

IS's Jeremy Ruane reporting on the Kingz v Sydney Olympic match. Is this a subtle Mardi Gras reference?

"I've got a good face for radio"

Breakers' Lee Sterrey on his media potential.

"It's actually better the second time around!"

IS's Melissa Muscat on her favourite restaurant Buonavoglia's on Ramsay.

"Our fans ... you are the VIPs of soccer."

Bernd Stange on the Glory supporters.

"Well I guess I'll just have to be happy with a muffin and a candle (woohooooo)."

Kingz' Levent Osman on the prospects of spending his birthday away from home in NZ.

"If that was offside I'll bare my arse in Grace Bros shop window!"

John Kosmina. By the way, is it possible for Kossie not to swear, just for one week?

NSL TOP SCORERS:

MICHAEL CURCIJA

(South Melbourne)

16

PABLO CARDOZO (SO)

14

CON BOUTSIANIS (PG)

13

DAMIAN MORI (ACF)

12

CROWD COMPARISON:

Cumulative to Round 24

99/00: 997,460

98/99: 958,357

Fixture changes:

*Please note that the Marconi Stallions and Perth Glory game in Sydney will be played on Good Friday April 21 kick-off 6pm (in place of the original Easter Saturday)



NSL match reports and analysis follows on the next eight pages

	(Overall)									(Home)					(Away)				
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD		W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	24	13	5	6	46	27	44	19	6	4	1	29	13	7	1	5	17	14	14
Wollongong Wolves	24	12	7	5	49	34	43	15	8	1	3	24	16	4	6	2	25	18	12
Perth Glory	23	12	7	4	44	30	43	14	7	3	2	27	18	5	4	2	17	12	13
Newcastle Breakers	24	12	7	5	35	28	43	7	7	4	1	24	15	5	3	4	11	13	13
Marconi Stallions	24	11	6	7	33	29	39	4	6	2	4	15	14	5	4	3	18	15	15
South Melbourne	24	10	5	9	38	36	35	2	7	2	3	23	12	3	3	6	15	24	13
Carlton	23	9	6	8	36	29	33	7	5	4	3	18	12	4	2	5	18	17	13
Brisbane Strikers	24	9	6	9	33	30	33	3	5	4	3	22	13	4	2	6	11	17	13
Parramatta Power	23	9	5	9	39	34	32	5	5	4	3	21	15	4	1	6	18	19	13
Football Kingz	22	9	5	8	38	36	32	2	4	3	3	16	16	5	2	5	22	20	13
Adelaide Force	24	8	7	9	33	27	31	6	6	3	3	24	13	2	4	6	9	14	13
Northern Spirit	24	8	3	13	27	41	27	-14	5	2	5	14	18	3	1	8	13	23	13
Melbourne Knights	24	7	6	11	27	43	27	-16	5	2	5	13	14	2	4	6	14	29	13
Gippsland Falcons	24	6	7	11	16	29	25	-13	3	3	6	9	13	3	4	5	7	16	13
Canberra Cosmos	23	5	6	12	29	44	21	-15	3	3	5	13	13	2	3	7	16	31	13
Sydney United	24	3	4	17	14	40	13	-26	3	2	8	11	19	0	2	9	3	21	13

Canberra Cosmos v Carlton playing tonight (Tuesday).



Soccer Equipment for Serious Footballers

- **Match Balls** (NSWSF, NSWASF, NNSWSF, VSF, QSF endorsed)
- **Practise Balls**
- **Shin Pads**
- **G/K Gloves**
- **G/K Clothing**
- **Bags**
- **Soccer Accessories**

Used by
Blacktown City,
Parramatta Eagles,
Altona East Phoenix,
Heidelberg,
Gold Coast City,
Oakleigh Cannons

Your club can join the
• **"REAL TEAM"**

For Details of this and for your local **REAL** stockist

call
(02) 9557 5522

e-mail: albion@arc-alb.com.au



Spirit overwhelmed by stylish Wolves

NORTHERN SPIRIT 0

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 3

Young pen 20, Cervinski 26, Horsley 52.

Friday night at North Sydney Oval. Crowd: 6, 500.



MATCH STATS:



NORTHERN SPIRIT: P Henderson, L Casserly, J Sobczyk, R Enes (D Seal 46), M Cunico, P Bilokapic, S Cranney, N Berti (T Cranney 70), T Faria, R Slater (C), S Catanzaro



WOLLONGONG WOLVES: Pogliacomi, G Souris (N Spencer 82), A Ceccolli, R Stanton (B Blake 59), D Cervinski, M Horsley (C), P Reid, S Young (S Petrovski 72), D Mennillo, D Huxley, S Chipperfield

Yellows:

Spirit: Robbie Enes 21, Nicola Berti 51

Wolves: Matt Horsley 47

Best Players:

3 MATT HORSLEY (WOLVES)

2 Stuart Young (Wolves)

1 Alvin Ceccolli (Wolves)

Referee: Brett Hugo

By Paul Goodwin

Any hopes the disappointing Northern Spirit side may have entertained about featuring in this season's finals series quickly vanished when the strong Wollongong outfit took them apart on Friday night at North Sydney Oval.

Wolves were super-composed and confident against a Spirit side which lacked any cohesion or sense of self belief.

Things went wrong almost from the start, with Wollongong getting a couple of early let-offs due to lack of finishing power by the home team.

A fourth minute free kick from wide on the left was swung over invitingly, but with Les Pogliacomi looking hesitant, the shot which came in from Paul Bilokapic was easily blocked and when Simon Catanzaro latched onto the loose ball, his shot was headed off the line by David Cervinski.

Michael Cunico also managed to head well wide from a nice cross by Luke Casserly in the 16th and Spirit were made to pay for those misses very quickly.

The game was into its 20th minute when Wollongong won a corner on the left.

As the ball from Paul Reid sailed towards the far post Cervinski and Enes rose as one, but the Spirit player had his arm stretched to the sky and it made contact with the ball, hence a penalty was awarded, Enes copping a yellow card for good measure.

Stuart Young stepped up and placed his spot kick past Henderson with ease.

Wollongong keeper Pogliacomi again looked fragile in the 23rd when he never got near what appeared to be a regulation cross from the right byline by

Casserly, but the ball ran on to the far post where Tony Faria crossed back far too quickly and well beyond any of his team mates waiting in the six yard box.

Reid again provided the cross from another corner three minutes later which Paul Henderson left to a defender to clear. He may have erred, as no defender got anywhere near the well placed David Cervinski at the far post, who directed his firm header into the smallest gap in the top right corner of the net, from close range and with little margin for error.

Spirit, becoming more ragged as the game wore on, still had a chance to reduce the margin in the 31st, but their recent Italian signing, Nicola Berti, made a mess of a ball laid on a platter for him by Slater on the right hand edge of the box and Pogliacomi was able to gather the ball quickly as it ran off the toe of Berti's boot.

Matt Horsley, the Wolves skipper, was looking increasingly dangerous as the game progressed, but wary of the risk of conceding a penalty some challenges by Spirit defenders were a little tentative.

Not so in the 34th when a superb tackle by Bilokapic denied Horsley a clear passage into the penalty area after he had made a big run down the right and was bearing down on goal with menace.

Two Chipperfield corners from the right in the last ten minutes of the first half were punched away by Henderson, but his alertness had come too late, with two goals already on the board for the visitors.

Enes made way for David Seal at half time and the former Northampton striker added some thrust to the Spirit attacks, which had been unconvincing over the first 45 minute period.

Still Wollongong dictated terms, however, with Northern Spirit being made to look almost as if they were the travelling side, so lacking in assurance were they becoming by this stage.

The Wolves virtually put the game out of reach and effectively reduced the rest of the match to a tame affair, when they scored the best goal of the game in the 52nd minute.

It began when Horsley found himself free out wide on the right - he played the ball into the area. There the Wollongong players toyed with the Spirit defence with a series of short passes, eventually finding Horsley, with his back to goal, on the right of the area.

The skipper looked up, turned sharply and smacked a left footer into the bottom left corner of Henderson's net.

The game as a spectacle petered out after this, Slater having a long range, speculative shot in the 61st taken easily by the keeper and Bilokapic firing over the bar on a night when he enjoyed wretched fortune in most areas of the game.

With Spirit pushing forward now, Wollongong made a swift break and after more short passes on approach to goal the ball was presented to Cervinski who lobbed the advancing keeper, but in so doing missed the target by a narrow margin.

After Jack Sobczyk had lifted an effort over the bar in the 67th from a ball cleared to him from a corner and Bilokapic drove a free kick well over the bar, two remaining chances fell to the home side.



Graham Arnold: nothing to smile about this season.

Seal hit a good, low drive from deep on the left and Pogliacomi could only block the shot, the ball falling tantalisingly for Catanzaro, but the player could not get there in time to trouble the keeper again.

From another piece of lead-up work on the left Catanzaro got past the Wolves' offside ploy to go on and face the keeper, but then managed to slice the ball high and wide with his favoured left foot. Faria coming in at the far post could only help the ball on its way over the bar.

Seal also had another low shot deflected for a corner near the end, but victory and all the plaudits went to Wollongong who looked every bit a top of the table side, exuding confidence and comfortably taking the game to their out of touch opponents.

It was a good all-round performance from the Wolves who were solid in all departments, though Pogliacomi may have caused a few hearts to flutter at various

stages, but they got through the game without conceding a goal.

Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos said afterwards he was happy with his defensive performance.

"I'm ecstatic for our performance, but in particular for not conceding a goal for once."

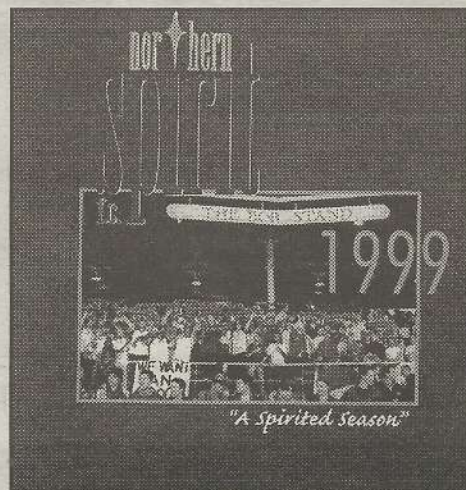
"Our desperation early was evident with Cervinski's goal-line clearance a big factor in our win."

As Spirit coach Graham Arnold imparted after the game.

"Once again we've missed an early chance and we were made to pay by conceding two goals from set pieces."

Wolves got to within a point of leaders Sydney Olympic after this win, following Olympic's loss across the Tasman earlier in the evening.

On this showing Wolves thoroughly deserve to be there.



Cover Price \$10 (plus

\$2.50 Postage per copy)

To Purchase a Copy

send request to:

Northern Spirit FC

c/- Micky Brock

15 Ridge St

North Sydney NSW 2060

Also available at the ground

on match days or call the

office during business

hours

(02) 9460 2187

To get your hands on 'A Spirited Season' answer the question below, cut out this ad and send to Inside Soccer: PO Box 3889 Parramatta NSW 2124. No photocopies accepted but you can send us as many entries as you like. Competition will be drawn on March 13 with the winners announced in March 14 issue. First five correct answers

win.

Question: Which Spirit player left this season to join Molde in Norway?

Answer:

Name:

Address:

The Magnificent Damian Mori

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 4

Mori 12, 80, Vidmar 40, Kemp 45.

SYDNEY UNITED 0

Friday night at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Crowd 5,000 (approx).



MATCH STATS



ADELAIDE CITY FORCE: Knezevic, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Sabljak, Vidmar, Cartwright, Kemp (Brain 46), Costanzo, Hassell, Kim (Zelic 68).



SYDNEY UNITED: Tolios, Bozinovski, Moric, Saric, Palapanis, Maric, Arrarte, Savoca, Pondejak, Usljebrka (Zec 61), Bosevski (Rakic 73).

Yellows:

United: Savoca 11, Palapanis 43.

BEST PLAYER

3 MORI (FORCE)

2 Sabljak (Force)
1 Costanzo (Force)

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

with a perfectly struck low free kick from 20 metres through the United defensive wall after only twelve minutes. The ball hit the inside of the right post, then angled into the back of the net.

The crowd, many of whom had come specifically to see history in the making, rose to give the hometown hero a standing ovation, then settled down to wait for him to smash the record.

As the game entered its final stages, they resigned themselves to the possibility that Mori may not get that elusive second goal. Then, as if choreographed for maximum suspense and celebration, it happened.

Brad Hassell sent the ball across from the right for Mori running into the penalty area on the left. He struck the ball hard on target but United keeper Steve Tolios managed to get a foot to it, deflecting it away from goal. Lady Luck was on Mori's side - the ball bounced almost on the bye-line and a wicked spin turned it into the net.

Hindmarsh erupted and Mori, usually so businesslike on the pitch, couldn't keep the smile from his face. Another record in front of his home crowd, and another record at the expense of Sydney United, who were also the hapless victims of his world record fastest goal.

Apart from breaking the goalscoring record, Mori's second strike gave City an unassailable 4-0 lead and a lifeline in their bid to make the top six.

The danger signs started flashing for United only three minutes into the game, when City took advantage of the swirling wind to pump the ball over United defenders Terry Palapanis and Tom Maric for Mori to attempt a headed goal. Steve Tolios, well off his line, pulled off a miraculous reflex save with his left boot.

Carl Veart called Tolios into action again, shooting on target from 20 metres, then Nick Sabljak chipped the ball in for Mori who lobbed it into the centre of the penalty area for Aurelio Vidmar, but 'Viddie's' volley went over the bar.

This unheard of early aggression from traditional slow starters City was amazing. It seemed Mori's chance for the record had spurred the entire team on to make sure he succeeded.

It was Vidmar's ball wizardry which earned City a free kick 20 metres out a few minutes later.

He had dodged and weaved through the defence almost to the edge of the box when Vince Savoca tripped him.

In a well rehearsed move which achieved its desired effect of confusing the United wall and giving Tolios no chance of seeing the ball until late, Vidmar and Sabljak ran over the ball before Mori struck it through a slight gap in the wall - one nil to City and an record equalling goal for Mori.

Determined to make amends, Usljebrka shot just over the bar, then Savoca and Arrarte combined to pressure the City defence.

Savoca sent the ball into the penalty area, but a comedy of errors saw three chances go begging in the space of a



Damian Mori ... owner of goal scoring record that should stay around for a long time.

minute.

From then on it was all City, with Angelo Costanzo, Alex Tobin, Michael Cartwright, Veart and Dongi Ki Kim forming an impenetrable wall at the back, while Sabljak, Hassell, Vidmar and Mori ran riot up front.

United's lack of NSL experienced players became more and more obvious as the game went on. Their one shining light was Tom Pondejak, but he had very little support from his team mates.

City's second goal came from a corner on the left hand side. Sabljak lobbed the ball high into the centre of the penalty area for Vidmar to leap over the defence to header in on 40 minutes - textbook stuff and a pleasure to watch.

The crowd were really getting their money's worth and the cheersquad, sadly disappointed at the start of the match when the wind destroyed their banner, went into overdrive.

They only had to wait five minutes for City's third. Revelation of the season, Matthew Kemp, said 'Thanks very much' to Mori for heading the ball to him in the six-yard box, where he in turn popped a header over Tolios - 3-0 City at half time.

The second half saw a much slower pace than the first, with City looking more tired than United, but still solid in defence to deny Pondejak, Bosevski and Palapanis. Costanzo kept the crowd buzzing with his specky sliding tackles, while Tobin, who again suffered a head injury in the first half, continually repelled everything in the air.

'Sal' the Clown, visiting from the Adelaide Festival, entertained during lulls in the on-field action, encouraging the

fans to push for Mori to score again.

The icing was on the cake in the 80th minute after a spell of slack passing from both sides.

Hassell, who missed two open chances earlier in the game, turned provider, sending Mori away on the left. Mori ran the ball into the box, drew out Tolios and shot. And the rest, as they say, is history.

After the match, Mori, in his usual humble manner, played down his historic record, saying it was more important for City to get into the top six, while Sydney United conceded that their inexperience was a contributing factor in their loss to a much better side.

Statistics for the game (courtesy Mark Baylis, radio MMM) vindicated this, with City having 15 shots, six on target, to United's six shots with none on target.



Aurelio Vidmar: getting back to his best form

By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

One hundred and thirty seven...ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY EIGHT!! He's done it! NSL goal magician Damian Mori set Hindmarsh alight when he smashed the all time NSL goalscoring record in cold windy conditions on Friday.

With the bookies offering the shortest odds ever (2/1) for Mori to score the first goal of the match, he equalled the record

COAST FM
88.5
ADELAIDE
TALKING SOCCER EVERY
SUNDAY MORNING
9-11.30 AM
EVERYTHING FROM THE
ADELAIDE AND NATIONAL SCENE

Olympics dreamer scuttles Olympic's dream

FOOTBALL KINGZ 2

Perry 67, Rufer 79.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 0

Friday night at North Harbour Stadium, Auckland. Crowd: 3,762.



MATCH STATS:



FOOTBALL KINGZ:

Batty; Bunce, Jones, Van Steeden; Perry, Jackson (Moya, 84), Ngata, Vicelich, Stergiopoulos; Elrick (Rufer, 65), Suri (Campbell, 65).

SYDNEY OLYMPIC:

Kourtis; Zoricich, Baillie, Juric, Wilson (Zorbas, 72); Carle, Emerton, Thomas, Mendez; Arambasic (Tome, 76), Cardozo.

Yellows

Kingz: L. Jones (41).

Olympic: G. Mendez (87), B. Emerton (89).

Best Players:

3. PERRY (KINGZ)
2. Thomas (Olympic)
1. Campbell (Kingz)

Referee: Con Diomis

By Jeremy Ruane

At the start of the year, mid-field playmaker Jeff Campbell's footballing priorities were focused on one thing - being one of his country's sporting representatives at the Olympic Games in Sydney this September.

For that priority to be realised, he has to help the 'OlyWhites' overcome the fourth-best African nation in a home-and-away play-off within the next ten weeks.

In the ensuing two months, however, the goal posts have moved somewhat significantly for the twenty-year-old son of former All White, Clive Campbell.

Jeff has become an All White himself, having made two appearances for his country this year, in China and here in New Zealand during the two-test series, against Korea in January.

Since then, a successful two-week trial period saw him sign up for the Football Kingz in late February. And on Friday, March 3, at North Harbour Stadium, he was given his first taste of the professional environment from which many players the world over earn their living.

Most players, when faced with this seemingly daunting task, seem quite content to just get a feel for the action, and are more intent on not doing anything wrong than catching the eye.

Campbell, however, opted for the latter approach, and confidently stamped his mark on the game in no uncertain terms, much to the chagrin of the visiting Sydney Olympic combination.

The number ten was the architect of both the Football Kingz goals in a famous 2-0 victory which saw the fledgling football club add the scalp of the league leaders to

that of defending champions South Melbourne, as clubs who have succumbed to the Kingz both at home and on the road in their debut season.

Entering the fray alongside the worldly-wise Wynton Rufer in the 65th minute, the hard-working pint-sized front-running pairing of Mark Elrick and Batram Suri stepping aside for Oceania's footballing sorcerer and his new apprentice in an enterprising double-substitution, Campbell grasped the opportunity granted him with both hands, and made the unsuspecting opposition pay within two minutes of his introduction.

A slide-rule pass through the inside-right channel gave the oft-overlapping Jonathan Perry yet another chance to stretch his legs down Olympic's left flank, something which the hard-working wing-back had done with gay abandon, but with little reward, throughout the preceding 67 minutes.

This time, however, his reward was ample, albeit courtesy a timely stumble by Olympic's left-back, Lindsay Wilson. Hesitating at the sound of fast-approaching Kiwi hooves - a sound many in the Australian harness racing and galloping industries have come to dread in recent years! - Wilson froze like the proverbial rabbit in headlights, and paid the penalty.

Perry relieved him of the ball, and proceeded to relieve the concerns of many in the 3,762-strong crowd with an unerring finish from twelve yards into the far corner of the net, the ball careering under the diving figure of Jim Kourtis en route.

Campbell led the celebrations, and was instrumental in doing so again twelve minutes later, as Olympic's defence committed the cardinal sin of leaving an opponent unmarked at the near post, a zone into which Campbell curled an inviting corner.

On some occasions, such lax defending can go unpunished. But when the opponent concerned is the Kingz player-coach ... Rufer's header sealed a much-needed three points for the local side, and left the league leaders contemplating slipping from a rung they have occupied since the end of round eleven.

And what of Campbell's dream debut? "Maybe if I'd scored the winner, then, yes, it would have been!" joked the 1998 winner of the Bluebird Northern Premier League Player of the Year award, an honour claimed a year after winning the Young Player of the Year award in the same competition.

"But it's certainly pretty close to being one. It was a great experience playing alongside Wynton, particularly as I've mostly played in central midfield. But I'm now starting to get the hang of it up front, too". This from a player who scored thirteen goals in his twenty-two North Island Soccer League appearances for Mt. Wellington last season, and has struck twice for the "OlyWhites" since their Olympic qualifying campaign began in earnest last December.

Olympic - the Sydney variety - could easily have scored as many goals themselves in this match before the introduc-



You're out! Wynton Rufer signals Olympic's demise in NZ on Friday night after goal two. With him is the impressive Lee Jones.

tion of the Rufer-Campbell dream ticket gave the Kingz the cutting edge which tipped the duel in their favour.

Zlatko Arambasic rattled Jason Batty's left-hand upright with a bullet-like header in just the second minute, while "Olyroos" captain Brett Emerton, Scott Baillie, Nick Carle and prolific goalscorer Pablo Cardozo, whose two hundredth NSL match this was, all went close before the interval, a period in which Scott Thomas was in outstanding form.

In ever-willing man-of-the-match Perry and the style-conscious celebrant of 150 NSL appearances,

Marcus Stergiopoulos, the Kingz, whose play-off prospects were revitalised by this victory, had two players who were toiling tremendously up and down the flanks.

But Olympic's "all court press" approach dogged the home side at every turn, and gave them little time to develop their usually patient approach play through other outlets, meaning that as the first half ended, the home side, while level on the scoreboard, were trailing on points.

All this on a distinctly unhealthy-looking pitch made to look so by the still-visible imprints of the stage settings used for the "La Traviata" opera - further fuel, were any necessary, to the argument against the use of football grounds as multi-purpose venues!

Inside the first fifteen minutes of the second spell, the visitors had their hosts on the ropes, and were intent on providing the knockout blow, in the form of an opening goal. Somehow, it remained elusive, Cardozo, Arambasic and Carle all going close during a period of the match in which twenty-one players were often sighted in one half of the field.

But the Kingz stood their ground, albeit at times tremulously, and the efforts of Riki Van Steeden, Lee Jones and Che Bunce, in repelling this incessant onslaught, should not go unmentioned. Later, Jason Batty, too, was

to the fore, fellow All White Chris Zoricich, Emerton, Norman Tome and Ante Juric all thwarted by the custodian.

By this time, however, the debutant had turned the game on its head and scuttled Olympic's dream of returning home with three points in the process. Meanwhile, Jeff Campbell's own Olympics dream lives on!

SITTER!

The New Zealand soccer fanzine



Subscription rates: 5 issues \$15 10 issues \$30

Dear Sitter!, I agree subscribing to your magazine will greatly enhance my lifestyle. I enclose \$15/\$30 (delete as required).

Cheques made out to B Holloway.
Post to 11 Thames St, Hamilton

My name is:

My postal address is:

SITTER!

You wouldn't want to miss it

South crash Beardo's party

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 0

SOUTH MELBOURNE 4

Curcija 40, 88 pen, Anastasiadis 63, Clarkson 80

Sunday night at Knights Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd: 11,451.



MATCH STATS:



MELBOURNE

KNIGHTS: John, Banini, Kovacevic, Vukadin (Nastevski 66"), Beardsley (Reda 60"), Kiratzoglou, Rahjer (Susa 45"), Silic, Magdic, Cervinski, Kelic.



SOUTH MELBOURNE:

Jones, Orlic, Liparoti, Blatsis, Clarkson, Iosifidis, Alagich, Trimboli (Tsekenis 76"), Vlahos (Magnacca 76"), Anastasiadis (Lozanovski 63"), Curcija.

Yellows

Knights: Silic 50

South Melbourne: Vlahos 75

Reds:

Knights: Banini 90

Best Players:

3. TRIMBOLI (SOUTH MELBOURNE)

2. Magdic (Knights)

1. Clarkson (South Melbourne)

Referee: Mark Shield

all that, they had the weather gods on their side as well.

Yet the most important element eluded them - a result. Having won or drawn their last eight games straight, one wondered if they could make it nine against a finals-charging South Melbourne side bent on teaching their opponents a lesson in effective build-ups and clinical finishing.

South Melbourne indeed did exactly that, hammering home four unanswered goals after the Knights made most of the play throughout the first half.

A fifteen-minute delay to proceedings was due to the sheer numbers pouring into Knights Stadium, and this only added to the sense of anticipation.

All the talk in the media area concerned "Beardo", although another legend in Paul Trimboli showed that perhaps the positive headlines were better directed at himself.

The little maestro kept offering decisive balls to unmarked forwards, particularly during the second half, and he nearly scored some goals of his own just to pile up a little more pressure on the Knights.

Beardsley's game was, as to be expected, something of a loosener for him, but on occasions he did work in well within the midfield. He was rarely closely marked, as both sides allowed the other the freedom to move the ball from the centre to the flanks.

His substitution in the 60th minute emphasised Vlado Vanis' intentions in not wanting to wear his guest player out, nearly as much as it indicated his desire to eke out a result.

The Knights' best player was Paul Magdic, who seems to have hit a purple patch in recent weeks. The midfielder sent two superb crosses to Ivan Kelic within the first twenty-five minutes.

Had Kelic put the first one away rather than allowing it to skew off his head, the Knights may well have made a better game of it, yet it was most evident that South Melbourne were a class above their opponents on this occasion.

This became evident by the 31st minute, when Andy Vlahos found Michael Curcija in the centre and about twenty metres out from goal. Curcija slickly shot on the turn straight to Martin John, but had his radar been adjusted by a few degrees he might have truly tested the Knights goalkeeper.

Iosifidis did not have one of his better games, yet he provided the unmarked John Anastasiadis with a golden chance ten minutes later. Anastasiadis could only manage to head over the bar on this occasion.

Souths broke the deadlock when Trimboli lofted a ball into the tightly contested penalty area. A Knights defender looked to have nodded to ball down harmlessly, yet Curcija sized up the loose ball

and aimed his header wide of the stunned Knights custodian to register the first goal of the game, just before the sounding of the half-time whistle.

The second half was bought and owned by South Melbourne due to a consistent, patient and professional display that proves they are virtually back to their best, and the rest of the competition will do well to acknowledge this fact.

Trimboli again threatened when he collected a loose ball from Beardsley, and from 20 metres out he belted the ball goalward, only to see it parried forward and then haphazardly regathered by John.

It was interesting to note how the Knights then fell apart after Beardsley's substitution.

Although the veteran did not have a lot of the on-ball play, his experience and presence might have been enough to give South Melbourne some cause for caution.

After his replacement in Michael Reda came on, cohesion in the middle slipped away from the Knights and South Melbourne got into a 'floodgate-opening' frame of mind.

Trimboli lofted a good ball to Curcija to head wide in the 62nd minute. A minute later Andy Vlahos worked the by-line and then slipped a pinpoint low cross to Anastasiadis, who made no mistake heading home past John. Two-nil up and Souths had the wind in their sails.

The Knights showed brief flourishes of effort during the middle of the second half, particularly when Zeljko Susa worked a nice one-two with Michael Reda.

Susa fired from a position marginally inside the area to the slight right of the centre of goal, yet Chris Jones had the shot accounted for and took it with open arms.



Peter Beardsley: after his substitution Knights lost their way (see story page three.)

In other news, South's Michael Curcija has been named in the predominantly Euro-based Olyroo squad for games against Slovakia U23 (March 22) and Holland U23 (March 28) in Europe.

Australia U23:

Didulica (Ajax), Milosevic (Leeds United), Baser (Vanspor), Blatsis (South Melbourne), Coyne (West Ham), Farah (Marconi), Laybutt (Parramatta), Neill (Millwall), Bresciano (Empoli), Burns (Parramatta), Culina (Ajax), Damianos (Xanthi), Emerton (Sydney Olympic), Grella (Ternana), Rizzo (Crystal Palace), Wehrman (Perth Glory), Allsopp (Man City/Wrexham), Curcija (South Melbourne), Salapaidis (Compostela), Zane (Molde)



Michael Curcija: leading NSL scorer and named in the Olyroos for two Euro games. Life's good?

By Mark Fisher

It wasn't the way the script was supposed to read. The Knights had their star English import - the former Liverpool and Geordies legend Peter Beardsley, and had enjoyed loads of hype surrounding his appearance to boot.

They had a ground record-breaking gathering of 11,415 turn up to see the some entertaining football. And to add to

INSIDE SOCCER SOLD OUT?

Tell your newsagent to reserve a copy or order more by contacting the distributor

'Wrapaway'

on 02 9550 1622



Strikers Bernd by Stange's Glory boyz

BRISBANE STRIKERS 1

Grierson 86.

PERTH GLORY 3

Trajkovski pen 18, Edwards 28, Aurelio 36.

Saturday night at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Brisbane. Crowd, 2,307.



MATCH STATS:



BRISBANE STRIKERS:

1. Bolton, 2. Gwynne, 8. Pilic (14. North 57'), 10. Srhoj, 11. Hews, 12. Dwyer (17. Harris 64'), 13. McLaren, 15. Battistin, 16. Grierson, 18. Meredith (9. Foster 53'), 21. McKain



PERTH GLORY:

23. Petkovic, 2. Trajkovski (13. Afkos 80'), 3. Harnwell, 4. Aurelio, 6. Naven (22. Milicevic 82'), 7. Miller, 9. Edwards (21. Ergic 86'), 11. Wehrman, 14. Valle, 15. Junior, 16. Boutsianis

Yellows:

Strikers: Clint Bolton 18', Stuart McLaren 31', Wayne Srhoj 57';
Glory: Gareth Naven 78'.

Best Players:

1. ROBERT TRAJKOVSKI (PERTH)
2. Dion Valle (Perth)
3. Con Boutsianis (Perth)

Referee: Eddie Lennie

to Con Boutsianis, whose attempted chip did not trouble Socceroo goalkeeper Clint Bolton.

Brisbane had a chance shortly afterwards when youngster Jon McKain, who was making his NSL debut, sent in a cross to Peter Dwyer.

The Scottish striker, a police officer who patrols Surfers Paradise beaches by day, could only manage a weak header which was gathered easily by Glory keeper Jason Petkovic.

That remained Brisbane's only decent chance of the game before they found themselves a goal down in the 18th minute.

Bolton brought down Brazilian Aurelio Schwartz in the penalty area and referee Eddie Lennie wasted no time in pointing at the spot and showing Bolton a yellow card. Robert Trajkovski sent Bolton the wrong way to score his first ever goal for the club.

The Glory doubled their lead ten minutes later with some great play by former Strikers favourite Kasey Wehrman. His great run set up Alistair Edwards' well-taken goal.

Brisbane lacked any shape on the field and their defence was made to look pedestrian by Perth's attack. It was only a matter of time before the Glory put the game out of reach.

Brisbane's David Pilic tested Petkovic in the 36th minute, but Perth's counter attack proved lethal.

Boutsianis ran the ball up the right wing and passed the ball to Trajkovski, who was having an inspirational game for the Glory.

Trajkovski set up Schwartz, whose header hit the underside of the bar and found its way over the line. It was the Brazilian's first goal for the club.

Chay Hews could have got one back for the Strikers after Nick Meredith's long-range effort ricocheted off the Glory defence. He shot the loose ball past Petkovic, but it dribbled to the wrong side of the left upright.

Perth went into half time with a convincing 3-0 lead, and many at the ground would have been dreading a continuation of the first half.

The home supporters' fears were allayed because Brisbane came out in the second stanza a much improved outfit, particularly when Paul Foster replaced Meredith to make his much-anticipated return from injury.

Stuart McLaren moved to the defence and Mark Battistin joined Foster in the front line in the subsequent reshuffle, a move that added an extra dimension to the Strikers' play and heralded a Brisbane resurgence.

Peter Grierson had a great opportunity to score just before the 70th minute when his thunderous 20 metre shot beat Petkovic but not the crossbar.

A minute later, Foster almost had a dream return to the Strikers line-up as he tried to get on the end of a Battistin low cross. The ball was agonisingly close to the advancing Foster, but he did not have the legs to connect.

The Strikers finally began to take control of the game and had a series of good chances. Grierson finally converted a chance when he headed home a goal in the 86th minute from a Jeromy Harris cor-

ner, but it was too little too late for Brisbane.

Glory coach Bernd Stange was happy to continue Perth's great record in Brisbane, where they remain undefeated.

"Sometimes I get the feeling it is a lot easier for us to play away from home because the pressure is on us in Perth because we have 15-16,000 people wanting a win," he said.

"It was important that we had a good revenge today because this season we've lost only one game in Perth and it was against Brisbane.

"We did a good job, especially in the first half, and after 2-0 it was very easy for us to play.

"If we had a little bit more class and a little bit more feeling for the situation then we could have had a much more comfortable win."

In stark contrast, Brisbane coach John Kosmina was disappointed with his side's performance.

"We had no balance whatsoever in the first half, but we fixed that when we made the change (Foster for Meredith) just after half time," he said.

"Perth are very comfortable on the ball and they've got some clever players with a fair bit of football intelligence."

Stange said he was concerned about the fitness of his players going into the finals series.

"In the past four or five games we have had very bad performances in the second half and the reason is simple - we are not fit enough to play 90 minutes," he said.

"Every day we have 35 degrees in Perth and there is no lighting for training, so we train at four or five o'clock.

"I can't push my team to the physical level that we can go for 90 minutes in such heat, and I hope as things get a little bit cooler in the next couple of weeks we can improve our fitness for the finals."

One positive Kosmina could draw from the match was the return of top goalscorer Paul Foster.

"I actually thought about starting him,



Aurelio Schwartz: scored his first goal for Glory.

but he would have run out of legs by half time," he said.

"He did well when he came on taking up good positions and holding the ball up well. He's experienced and it shows."

Kosmina said team spirit is still there despite a very poor run of results, which has seen them winless since Round 19.

"At the start of the season no-one expected anything of us, so consequently there was no pressure on the players whatsoever," he said.

"Then all of a sudden we got a couple of results and they started to believe in themselves.

"We were on top of the table, but the players still didn't feel the pinch until we dropped a couple of games that we shouldn't have dropped. Now people have probably got expectations of us and some of these guys aren't used to that."



Alistair Edwards: scorer of the second goal.

By Cameron Atfield

Perth Glory showed they were serious title contenders on Saturday night when they defeated the Brisbane Strikers 3-1 at Suncorp Metway Stadium.

Perth dominated play throughout the first half and had their first chance to score when Robert Trajkovski sent a through ball

Great Graphic Design. Great price.

- ◆ Logos
- ◆ Letterheads
- ◆ Business Cards

- ◆ Corporate Identity
- ◆ Brochures
- ◆ Advertising

Graphic Force



Tel: (02) 9624-1928

Vargas and Laybutt the stars of exciting draw

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1

Vargas 66.

PARRAMATTA POWER 1

Laybutt 23.

Saturday night at Falcons Stadium, Morwell. Crowd: 1, 850.



MATCH STATS:



GIPPSLAND FALCONS:

Jevdjovic, Fak, Gotis, Durakovic, MacNicol, Vargas, Bell, Puca, Hutchinson,

Marcina, Mandic (Nilo 70). [Not used: Savage, Robertson]



PARRAMATTA POWER:

Gibson, Barrett, Eagleton, Plesa, Burns, Ardone (Griffiths 46),

Sterjovski (Townsend 83), Berry, Laybutt, Byrnes, Gibson. [Not used: Blagojevic]

Yellows:

Falcons - Puca (4), Hutchinson (86).
Power - Gibson (43), Burns (90).

Best Players:

3. ANDY VARGAS (GIPPSLAND)
2. Steve Laybutt (Parramatta)
1. David Barrett (Parramatta)

Referee: Gerry Connolly



Falcons striker Igor Mandic. Had a good game upfront for Falcons.

By Cliff Hammond

Power coach Dave Mitchell's assessment "it was a hard game" was how he described his team's exciting tussle with Gippsland Falcons on Saturday night at Morwell. There was certainly little to choose between the teams throughout the encounter, and a draw always looked a likely outcome.

Although the match was dominated

by very solid defences, there were extended periods of exciting end-to-end football that stirred the vocal crowd. And two cracking goals that brought the game to life when it twice threatened to be reduced to a dour struggle.

The contest started slowly, with the teams testing each other for weaknesses.

Both seemed happy to move forward through long high passes, which were invariably quickly cut out by efficient defensive work. Tackles were hard, but mostly fair, although Manny Gotis (Falcons) and Jacob Burns (Power) both took heavy knocks in the first ten minutes.

Steve Laybutt in particular looked very comfortable on the ball, and as the game settled down he took several opportunities to move forward and test out the Falcons' midfield.

But it was the Falcons who looked most dangerous, with striker Igor Mandic proving a handful for the Power defenders.

Three times in quick succession Mandic went close to scoring, including a quick-thinking lob over the goalkeeper's head that went just wide of the goal.

Mehmed Durakovic drew a fine save from Power keeper Mike Gibson with a powerful shot from 30 metres out.

Just when the Falcons looked likely to take control of the game, Laybutt stopped them in their tracks with a superbly taken goal in the 23rd minute.

A quick forward thrust by Power's Walter Ardone found Jacob Burns on the right wing. Burns' cross was cleared for the Falcons by Doug Marcina, only for Laybutt to smash a left-foot volley straight into the roof of the net from a good 25 metres out.

The mix of audacity and arrogance with which the young Soccerroo took the chance clearly stunned the crowd and the Falcons players, and Gippsland were very much on the back foot for several minutes afterwards.

Parramatta threatened to run away with the match, with Ardone, Burns and David Barrett forcing the ball forward relentlessly. But Falcons gradually regrouped, with some inspirational play from Durakovic, Clayton Bell and Andy Vargas.

Vargas in particular began to get control of the midfield, and he went very close to scoring with a shot from outside the penalty area that left keeper Gibson flat-footed, only to see the ball curl onto the post and bounce clear.

Then a jinking run by Vargas put Brian MacNicol through to shoot just wide of the goal.

The remainder of the first half was flowing and entertaining soccer. Power favoured the right side, mounting most of their challenges through Burns and Barrett. Falcons used both wings effectively, with Robbie Puca, John Hutchinson and Marcina keen to take on a defender to create an advantage.

Power brought on Joel Griffiths for Ardone straight after half-time, and most of their attacking moves were then aimed at utilising his phenomenal pace.

Parramatta forward Mile Sterjovski

had been well covered by Gippsland's Dean Fak, and the Power forward play began to look very predictable.

Power's most exciting moments were from Richard Plesa, who seemed to be on a 'shoot-on-sight' mission, striking several powerful shots from well outside the penalty area.

Gippsland however were keen to run straight at the Power defence, with Mandic again going close to scoring. Then in the 66th minute, Vargas intercepted a Power clearance near the half way line, and charged down the centre of the ground.

Seizing on a small opening in the Power defence, he calmly slotted a low shot into the bottom corner of the net.

Within a minute, Gippsland almost snatched the game when Mandic latched onto a sharp cross from Puca to the near post, but headed just wide.

Parramatta had seemed to want to close the game out, systematically getting plenty of players back into defence as soon as Gippsland took possession.

However, Vargas' goal stimulated another period of end-to-end play, but despite a series of goal-mouth scrambles, neither side was able to create a clear-cut chance at goal.

In an effort to break the deadlock, Falcons brought on Juan Nilo for Mandic, and Power used Danny Townsend to replace Sterjovski.

Vargas and Steve Berry (Power) both went close late in the second half, and Nilo threatened to break through on a couple of occasions without actually getting a clear shot on goal.

The game ended with both sides still pushing hard for a winning goal.

Vargas and Laybutt were outstanding. Laybutt has that touch of class that invariably sees him at ease when in possession, and he always looked dangerous when going forward.

Vargas created enthusiasm and energy in the Falcons midfield, and just shaded my Man of the Match because of the way he inspired his teammates when the chips were down.

After the game, Falcons' coach Jeff Hopkins said that his team still lacked a finishing touch, despite a lot of recent work on that area of their game.

He felt that it was vital that Falcons got something out of the match, and the performance gave them something to build on.

Dave Mitchell was happy with Parramatta's performance, given that "no-one takes Gippsland lightly playing here", but was disappointed to draw after leading one-nil because victory would have put Power into the top six.

Based on this performance, Parramatta looked like a team that will be thereabouts come finals time.



Man of the match: Andy Vargas. A consistently impressive performer who has been named in IS's February NSL all-stars.

A strong defence is supported by a competent midfield, but the one-dimensional nature of their route to goal was unexpected. In fact most of the more exciting and creative forward moves came from defence via Laybutt, Plesa and Barrett.

But given that they obviously saw this as a very tough away game, the strategy may have simply reflected a determination not to lose.

Falcons have developed a compelling mix of youth and experience which bodes well for the future, providing they can discover that right combination of luck and brilliance that turns possession into goals.

SU44 - The Millenium Issue

(Just in case the Y2K bug actually does something)



The Australian Fans' Perspective



Do Souths really need a Lift?

Plus - Joeys make History

Plus - Brazil - What did it prove?

Plus - Revealed: The Top Secret NSL criteria

Plus - Tony Labbozzetta sings 'My Way'?

Website

www.ozomail.com.au/~studsup/index.html

E-mail: studsup@ozomail.com.au

To purchase SU forward three 90c stamps. Subscriptions are \$16 for six issues, or \$30 for twelve issues. The address is:

P O Box 53,
Oakeigh South VIC 3167

Tough Breakers show their metal



MARCONI STALLIONS 1

Awaritefe 82

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1

Wilson 86

Sunday night at Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 3,409.

MATCH STATS:



MARCONI STALLIONS:

Aceski, Gibson, M. Babic, Longo, Care, Z. Babic (Awaritefe 53), Maloney (Trajanovski 77), Invincible, Duric, Karl (Junior 84), Zoric.



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS:

Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Dodd, Wilson, Buonavoglia (Trpceviski 89), Wiecezorek (Tomich 84), Owens (Smith 67), Harper.

Yellow:

Breakers: Harper 89.

Best Players:

3. M. BABIC (MARCONI)

2. Roberts (Newcastle)

1. Aceski (Marconi)

By Stephen Webb

In a surprisingly good game of football given the rain-drenched surface, Marconi had enough control of the game to have scored more goals and then to have held on to their 81st minute lead. But Newcastle's persistence - and greater reserves of energy - allowed them to cancel out a fine Francis Awaritefe goal to travel home with a point.

Early highlights were an effective tackle by Mark Babic on Andy Harper after Brad Maloney gave the ball away in midfield, a heavy challenge on Harry Karl by Shane Pryce, and Glenn Sprod making a timely intercept in defence before launching an attack from midfield.

In the seventh minute an Andy Roberts defensive header robbed Maloney in front of goal.

Marconi's first shot on goal, in the

ninth minute, was struck firmly into the chest of Bob Catlin. A minute later Zeljko Babic turned and struck wide of the right upright from the edge of the Newcastle penalty area.

In the 11th minute a long ball from Pryce into the left corner found John Buonavoglia who won a corner from Mark Babic. From Sprod's corner Danny Invincible headed at the near post, just clearing goal.

When Care delivered to Invincible running onto the ball on the right edge of Newcastle's area it took two tries to cross in to Maloney. Maloney, however, couldn't control and the ball was soon up the other end where Harper beat Care but ran into Mark Babic as he breached the Marconi penalty area.

At this stage both sides were competing for the ball. Both proved capable of pushing it around the pitch. But Marconi looked more assured in possession - Maloney their main weak link as they moved forward.

In the 19th minute Wiecezorek sent a curling cross in from the left. Harper was beaten but Travis Dodd headed down for Greg Owens' shot over the crossbar.

Marconi's response, a cross from the left touchline, had to be punched from the back post by Bob Catlin.

Newcastle's next threat began with a ball from Wilson to Harper in midfield. Harper found Buonavoglia on the left. He turned toward goal, beat Invincible, but couldn't deliver to Owens in front of goal.

In the 27th minute, after a series of blunders by both sides, Harry Karl beat Pryce and Sprod on the right side of the Newcastle area and crossed in to Zeljko Babic who shot wide.

On the half hour Harry Karl found possession inside Newcastle's penalty area and wasted a scoring opportunity - spinning and shooting left of target.

A 31st minute Marconi free kick eight metres outside the Newcastle area was fired into the wall and, from the rebound, wide to the right of goal. Three minutes later Karl became even more of a villain

when he made a wild air swing at a sitter in front of goal.

On the counter for Newcastle, Owens shot wide to the right.

In the 38th minute Harper made a long, fast run into Marconi's area and, with no options, had to be satisfied with winning a corner.

Two minutes later Todd McManus made an important (but illegal) tackle on Zeljko Babic running at goal. Marconi's free kick was on target, but Catlin held well.

Newcastle's first effort on target came in the 41st minute. An Owens cross was met by a lobbed header from Harper, Aceski having to reach back to prevent it falling under the crossbar.

Before the first half was over Aceski showed how good he was in the air under pressure, Invincible put in a good effort against Wiecezorek, and Mark Babic made an important intercept, on the ground in Marconi's penalty area.

After the break Buonavoglia put a good ball wide toward Wilson - but was cut out by Duric. Sprod had a shot high over the bar.

And Mark Babic spoiled a break by Wiecezorek down the left flank - Wiecezorek took it too far, ignoring Harper free wide on the right.

Babic ruined a Buonavoglia attack the same way minutes later - with Harper again free on the right.

Francis Awaritefe's 53rd minute appearance, his first since round 12, was a morale boost for Marconi.

In the 56th minute Care found Gibson who fired in low to the right post.

McManus and Catlin combined to perform a miracle. Catlin fell at the post to keep out a cross deflected by Karl, Awaritefe got a touch, but the ball skidded across the goal mouth to safety.

In the 59th minute Wiecezorek hit a long shot wide. Then Roberts made a string of important clearances. But Newcastle were starting to look sloppy.

In the 65th minute a long switch by Wilson found Harper on the right post but no-one was waiting for his head-down.

Buonavoglia skied from in front after a cross from Sprod, when Sprod looked better positioned to shoot himself from the edge of the goal box.

Marconi had a shot across the face of the Newcastle goal. And in the 70th minute Awaritefe came very close to putting Maloney through in the penalty area. His pass was slightly too firm.

Two minutes later Newcastle attacked through Wilson and Harper who took on his defender and crossed - only to be blocked at the near post.

This gave Marconi the chance to make another blunder: Invincible led the counter, passing long to Care 30 metres from goal. With Catlin coming to the edge of his area, the goal was wide open for a chip. But Care wasn't up to it, curling the ball just wide of the right upright.

In the 79th minute, after a period of play which saw Newcastle keep possession, probe down the right and cut toward goal, a Buonavoglia effort was saved on the line by Aceski.

Marconi's goal came in the 81st minute following incisive passing from left to right across field and a Kris Trajanovski shot into Roberts. Awaritefe scored from the edge of the goal box with a clever flick off his head, beating Catlin who was too slow to come out to meet a cross from Invincible.

The equaliser came four minutes



Man of the match: Mark Babic was back to his imposing best for the Stallions.

later. Newcastle latched onto a wayward pass from Duric, Sprod crossed from the left, Tomich was unsuccessful, but Wilson, running strongly from midfield, knocked in from three metres.

Things got a little hectic from then on. Buonavoglia beat Trajanovski in left midfield but Babic cleaned him up. Harper, with another spurt down the right, beat Duric and won a corner off Dominic Longo. And Roberts hit a thunderous shot from nearly 30 metres out, the ball touched by Aceski onto the crossbar and sent flying into the stratosphere.

Mark Babic was outstanding at the back for Marconi. Roberts put in some good hard tackling, sewed up Maloney (who he rates as the toughest player in the NSL), and led breaks from defence.

Alex Duric made some good runs in the first half, cutting in from the left. And Harper, strong in the air as usual, was careful not to waste energy and adroitly used his reserves taking on defenders down the right.

Eddie Krncevic was annoyed that Marconi hadn't collected maximum points from their recent home games. "But there's ten games to go so we've got to plug away. We had a few injuries, we had Mike Smith out, Renaud and Buddy Farah ... We had to play Duric left back which I don't think he's ever played."

He said Awaritefe was still missing match fitness and sharpness.

Lee Sterrey was disappointed ... but happy to get a point away from home. He said he was pleased with his troops but thought Newcastle should have won the match.

He said Newcastle should never have been a goal down: "We had two chances when they had nothing." He said Buonavoglia's chances were two of the easiest he had all year. "The kid's a good striker, he's done a great job for us all year ... but we should have had three points here. We should have nailed at least one and then chasing the game would have suited us down to the ground."

Sterrey said it took his players a while to settle down. "We had a few scared blokes out there. I don't know, for some reason you come to the palace and you don't want to play. But when we started to slow it down a bit in the second half and use the ball, and we still broke at pace, we just didn't execute well in the box - the only place we didn't execute well."

INSIDE SOCCER

SUBSCRIPTIONS

SAVE \$\$\$\$ WITH A REGULAR SUBSCRIPTION

\$120 for 52 issues

CUT OUT COUPON AND SEND TO:

INSIDE SOCCER PO BOX 3889 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Please make cheque payable to Inside Soccer Pty Ltd.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ **P/code** _____

Double celebration for South and Trimboli



SOUTH MELBOURNE 1 Trimboli 29. CARLTON 0

DEFERRED ROUND 13 GAME

Wednesday night at Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd 7,833.

MATCH STATS:



SOUTH MELBOURNE:
Jones, Iosifidis, Blatsis,
Liparoti, Orlic,
Lozanovski (Alagich 71),
Clarkson, Panopoulos,
Vlahos, Trimboli (c) (J
Anastasiadis 80), Curcija
(Coveny 71).



CARLTON: D
Anastasiadis, Atkinson,
McPherson, Horvat,
Douglas (Packer 76),
Thompson, Marth (c),
Lapsansky, Slater,
Conroy (Markovski 60), Moreira
(Motsiopoulos 79).

Yellows:

SMelb: Orlic (58), Blatsis (63), Coveny
66, Panopoulos (84).

Best Players:

3. IOSIFIDIS (SMELB)
2. Thompson (Carlton)
1. Clarkson (SMelb).

Referee: Jeremy Blaney

By Alan Clark

Every game between South Melbourne and Carlton since Carlton's arrival on the national stage three years ago, has been a cracker. The deferred Round 14 contest between these two ambitious Melbourne sides was no exception, South perhaps fortunate to run out 1-0 winners in an evenly-poised and open game.

The solitary goal which separated the teams was scored, fittingly, by South Melbourne captain and - following his start in this game - the club's longest-serving player, Paul Trimboli, just before the half-hour.

Played in front of a smaller crowd that would otherwise have been expected but for the intrusive Grand-Prix infrastructure, it deserved to have more watching the suspenseful unfolding of events.

The game had been deferred due to South Melbourne's Brazilian adventure at the turn of the year, but why it was played in the month where Bob Jane Stadium's surrounds are a no-go area is a mystery and did a disservice to what is a Melbourne football highlight.

These games deserve capacity attendance, and the unavailability of parking anywhere near the ground meant that fewer watched what more should have seen.

The peculiar draw in this year's NSL season meant that these two teams were to meet four times in the league, so perhaps those for whom the difficulties proved too great consoled themselves with the thought that they could catch one of the other two fixtures still remaining.

Trimboli's match-winning goal came after 29 minutes and was set up by Andy Vlahos, playing against his old club. Vlahos was fed a through ball and took it to the bye-line where he feinted a square

pass, completely wrongfooting two shadowing defenders Mark Atkinson and Archie Thompson. Vlahos instead played a ball back to the penalty-spot from where Trimboli rifled a low shot low to Dean Anastasiadis' right and into the net.

"It was close - pretty typical of a derby game. With the position both sides were in, I don't think (either side) was going to lay down and die today," said South Melbourne coach Ange Postecoglou after the game.

"From our point of view, to come out victors with the three points was very pleasing."

South Melbourne fielded a slight variation to its normal formation with Trimboli pushed up as one of the striking pair, rather than sitting in behind as has been usual for a while.

"(Trimboli was played up front as it) was a big day for Trimmers and I knew he'd play well," said Postecoglou. "He always does on the big occasions, and I thought we'd look for something extra. I thought we'd get him into the box and something might happen, and it did."

Another variation in the South line-up was the playing of defender Steve Iosifidis on the right, marking lively Carlton winger Stuart Slater.

For this, Postecoglou gave credit to his coaching partner Carl Halford.

"Carl suggested that it might be a good to stick Iosifidis out there and stop Slater, who is probably Carlton's most dangerous player."

"I thought it was a good idea, and would allow Goran Lozanovski to push forward a bit and give Lozanovski a bit more freedom. It suited the game today, but whether we'll persevere with it, we'll see how things go."

The Slater/Lozanovski duel was explosive last time these two teams met with Slater getting the better of the South wing-back, and eventually resulted in Lozanovski fouling Slater, being booked, then being sent off for dissent.

These two extraordinarily talented players were tonight not to be in direct competition, and each allowed a more free-flowing attacking role.

Carlton could justly have been aggrieved at South taking the lead, as on two earlier occasions it seemed that it would be they, rather than South, which would score first.

Midway through the first half, Alex Moreira had collected a pass, and cleverly played a square ball to Olyroo Thompson in a dangerous position. Thompson's first-time shot beat Chris Jones, but cannoned off the foot of the post.

Five minutes later, it was Moreira himself who was to squander an opportunity at least as promising. Slater fed a ball to the Brazilian who beat the offside trap and burst through a square South back-line. Facing only Jones, Moreira shot wide.

Just before the half ended, Carlton's grievances were compounded as it seemed referee Jeremy Blaney failed to see what every Carlton supporter saw, and most neutral observers did also.

Mike Conroy won a ball at the bye-line, and held the ball up cleverly until he



Paul Trimboli celebrates a record number of appearances and the winning goal.

saw support from Thompson behind and up the grandstand line.

Thompson crossed early to the edge of the six-yard box where Carlton's lion-heart captain Andrew Marth and South's Olyroo defender Con Blatsis contested the ball as it dropped. Blatsis appeared to get an arm in the way of the ball, but referee Blaney waved play on.

And just after the restart, Carlton rued Jones' saving ability after a corner was played to Marth, headed on to Steve Horvath who seemed certain to score from point-blank range but for Jones' stop.

Jones again saved South skins just after the hour from a John Markovski thunderbolt free-kick which he blocked and it was scrambled clear.

"It was a terrific save," said Postecoglou. "He's getting used to the fact that he's the number one keeper at South. He'll grow into that role, and I thought he was very good tonight."

Postecoglou was happy with his defence generally, as it was they who collectively kept South's lead when Carlton's constant pressure seemed certain to tell.

"Robert Liparoti was outstanding, (Con) Blatsis and Nick Orlic were solid, and Steve Iosifidis did a good job on Stuart Slater who is a good player and obviously a danger."

Carlton coach Stuart Munro was also upbeat, despite the result.

"I was looking for a performance out of the players to try to turn the season around," said Munro.

"As much as I really wanted to win this game tonight, the performance was probably more important. I knew that us playing badly, but

winning one-nil, might not have been enough for us to turn the season.

"We put in a performance that we haven't in the past four or five weeks, probably we created more opportunities tonight than we did in the last few weeks."

"The performance and the commitment that the players showed tonight is an indication that they can go on and win the vast majority of the games left this season."

"There's still a long way to go this season, there's a lot to be played for and a lot of points to be got."

Second deferred game on Page 22.

MY BLUE HEAVEN

the independent voice of the fans of Carlton S.C.

52



INSIDE

Exclusive interview with Lobo Lapsansky
Win a signed Carlton shirt

www.vicnet.net.au/~muscovic

Issue 6 March 2000

Ram

INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



Miner hits four as QAS go on rampage



Spirit goal scorer: Adam Griffiths

By Theo Katsaros

Sydney United overcame a spirited challenge by their Colts to record, what was in the end, a convincing 4-0 win. The Colts held their rivals scoreless in the first half but could not withstand the second half assault on their goal.

Steven Jordan started the ball rolling 3 minutes after the break before Steven Ralevski, formerly with the Colts, doubled the lead after 54 minutes. Two further strikes from Jordan in the 74th and 77th minutes sealed the result for the Youth.

At Christie Park, the early game between the Northern Spirit and the Wollongong Wolves ended in a 1-1 draw. The Wolves have fought back well in the past few months after a horror run of losses early in the season.

Adam Griffiths put the Spirit into the lead in the 50th minute but the joy was short lived. Jay Lucas replied for the Wolves within 5 minutes to set up an interesting finale. The teams had to be content with a point apiece as neither side could find that elusive winner. With the point gained, the Spirit have moved into equal top spot on the league ladder for the first time this season.

The late game at Christie Park ended scoreless as the Northern Spirit Colts held Sydney Olympic to a nil-all draw. Olympic have found scoring difficult of late and once again failed to live up to expectations. The Spirit Colts have also struggled of late but are a team that may spring a surprise if they perform well.

A 5 goal first half sealed a big 7-2 win for the Q.A.S. over the Wollongong Wolves Colts. The victory included a 4-goal haul to league top scorer Russell Miner. Miner has now bagged 20 goals for the second consecutive season.

It took Miner less than a minute to add to his growing tally. He also found his scoring touch in the 16th, 41st and 48th minutes. For the Q.A.S., Daniel Dreger, Lawrence Drake and Gino Invincible, younger brother of Marconi's Danny Invincible, recorded singles.

The Wolves Colts made a game of it in the second half and were rewarded with two early goals. Dimitri Zakilas scored in the 49th minute and Sam Keramea struck after 51 minutes. The second half ended 2-2 but the damage was already done.

The clash of the Institutes at the A.I.S. Soccer Field ended in 1-1 draw courtesy of a late equaliser for the N.S.W.I.S. These matches are always competitive and this one was no exception. The nil-all half time score is testimony to that.

Mitchell Prentice gave the A.I.S. the advantage when he found the net in the 59th minute. Just when it seemed that the hosts would hang on for a much needed victory, David Carney struck back in stoppage time to steal a point.

The Newcastle Breakers scored a late winner to snatch a 2-1 away victory over the Sydney Olympic Academy. The visitors led after just 3 minutes via a Paul Wheeler strike but the Olympians levelled in the 10th minute through Robert Gasper.

The match seemed destined to end in a draw until Peter Haynes found the back of the net to steal the game for the Breakers.

The A.C.T.A.S. and Marconi Stallions Colts clash will be played on Tuesday evening at the Bruce Stadium. The Marconi Stallions and Newcastle Breakers encounter was deferred due to the Stallions' involvement in the Viareggio Youth Tournament in Italy.

By Roy Hay

Carlton continued on its way at the head of the Southern Division with a five-nil win over Melbourne Knights Academy.

Carlton led two-nil at the break, but the Academy had its best spell just after the interval. Then when Carlton's third goal went in the resistance was broken and the final score might have been higher.

Carlton's goals came from Joshua Kennedy, outstanding in the game for his poise and strength, Steve Martin, each of whom scored twice, and Andrew Packer.

The Victorian Institute of Sport overcame third placed Bulleen Inter by five goals to one. David Terek gave the VIS a flying start in five minutes but that was the only goal of a tight first half.

Simon Storey scored in the 51st minute, but Adam Curcija pulled a goal back for Bulleen within a minute. It was still pretty evenly balanced until 78 minutes had gone when Terek got his second, quickly followed by Ricky Chillico and newcomer Michael Sham-Yuen.

South Melbourne had a close fought two-one win over Melbourne Knights at Knights Stadium. The home team took the lead through a penalty converted by Anthony Pelikan in the first half.

Coach John Kennedy reminded some of his experienced players of their responsibilities at half-time and the Blues were transformed after the interval. Tass Psonis scored in 51 minutes and Rade Culibrik followed up with a second five minutes later to put the Blues in front. Thereafter both sides had chances to score but neither could beat the opposing defences and it finished at two-one.

Gippsland Falcons overcame a tired Albury Wodonga by three goals to nil at Mobil Stadium. The borderers travelled down on the day at this seemed to take something out of their play, but to be fair the Falcons passed the ball around well and would have tired any side on the day.

Ross Duckworth was a consistent skipper but the whole team was much better balanced than it has been. Tony Pardo's fourth minute goal was the perfect start and Igor Stojanac added a second in 59 minutes. Milos Petrevski scored the third in 78 minutes.

Finally Fawknor Blues accounted for Preston Lions by three goals to one. Two quick goals in the 15th and 16th minutes more or less determined the outcome. Ben Menzies got the first and Ben Cunningham the second. Menzies scored a third just before half-time. The young Lions kept plugging away in the second half and got a little reward through Zoran Alexoski in 83 minutes.

NORTHERN DIVISION NYL

Parramatta Power	22	16	4	2	2	62	17	52
Northern Spirit	23	16	4	1	3	70	26	52
Sydney Olympic	22	13	4	2	5	57	30	43
Q.A.S.	22	13	2	2	7	63	36	41
Newcastle Breakers	21	13	1	1	6	41	25	40
A.I.S.	22	12	3	1	7	66	32	39
Marconi Stallions	18	12	0	1	6	50	24	36
Sydney United	21	11	1	1	9	35	39	34
Wollongong Wolves	22	10	3	2	9	32	33	33
A.C.T.A.S.	21	8	6	2	7	33	40	30
Newcastle Colts	23	9	2	1	12	36	44	29
Syd. Olympic Academy	22	8	1	2	13	41	69	25
N.S.W.I.S.	21	5	5	2	11	34	37	20
Marconi Stallions Colts	22	5	4	1	13	34	61	19
Northern Spirit Colts	23	4	5	1	14	23	54	17
Sydney United Colts	21	3	3	2	15	22	53	12
Wollongong Colts	20	0	2	1	18	11	90	2

ROUND 24

Sydney United Colts	0	Sydney United	4
		Jordan 48', 74', 77',	
		Ralevski 54'	
Northern Spirit	1	Wollongong Wolves	1
A Griffiths 50'		Lucas 54'	
Q.A.S.	7	Wollongong Colts	2
Miner 1', 16', 41', 48',		Zakilas 49', Keramea 5	
Dreger 19' Drake 31',			
Invincible 75'			
Northern Spirit Colts	0	Sydney Olympic	0
A.I.S.	1	N.S.W.I.S.	
Prentice 59'		Carney 90'	
Syd. Olympic Academy	1	Newcastle Colts	2
Gasper 10'		Wheeler 3', Haynes 88'	

TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2000

A.C.T.A.S. v Marconi Stallions Colts (Bruce Stadium - 5.00pm)

Marconi Stallions v Newcastle Breakers (Match deferred)

Bye - Parramatta Power

NORTHERN DIVISION Leading Scorers

RUSSELL MINER	Q.A.S.	20
Ryan Griffiths	Northern Spirit	14
Daniel Severino	Marconi Stallions	13
Elias Demourtzidis	A.I.S.	11
Kevo Gulesserian	Marconi Stallions (A.I.S.)	10
Daniel Kukucka	Parramatta Power	10
Allan Lo Proto	Sydney United	10

Round 25 Fixtures

FRIDAY 10 MARCH 2000

Newcastle Breakers v Sydney Olympic Academy (Breakers Stadium-5.15pm)

SATURDAY 11 MARCH 2000

Wollongong Wolves Colts v Parramatta Power (Brandon Park No. 2 - 4.00pm)

Marconi Stallions Colts v Q.A.S. (Marconi Stadium - 4.00pm)

SUNDAY 12 MARCH 2000

Marconi Stallions v Q.A.S. (Rd 18) (Marconi Stadium - 4.00pm)

Sydney United v A.C.T.A.S. (Sydney United Sports Centre - 4.00pm)

Sydney Olympic v A.I.S. (Belmore Sports Ground - 4.00pm)

Wollongong Wolves v Northern Spirit Colts (Brandon Park - 4.00pm)

Newcastle Breakers Colts v Sydney United Colts (Breakers Stadium - 5.00pm)

N.S.W.I.S. v Marconi Stallions (Match deferred)

Bye - Northern Spirit

SOUTHERN DIVISION NYL

Fawknor Blues 3	Preston Lions 1
Menzies 2, Cunningham	Alexoski
VIS 5	Bulleen Inter 1
Terek 2, Storey, Chillico,	Curcija
Sham-Yuen	
Gippsland Falcons 3	Albury Wodonga 0
Pardo, Stojanac, Petrevski	
Melbourne Knights 1	South Melbourne 2
Pelikan	Psonis, Culibrk
Carlton 5	Mel. Knights Acad. 0
Kennedy 2, Martin 2,	
Packer	
(Match postponed)	South Dand.: Bye

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CARLTON	14	11	3	0	52	8	36
VIS	14	10	1	3	40	12	31
Bulleen Kings	15	8	2	5	38	28	26
Melb. Knights	14	7	2	5	38	27	23
South Melbourne	12	7	0	5	33	13	21
Gipps. Falcons	13	5	3	5	26	25	21
South Dandenong	13	5	3	5	19	24	18
Fawknor Blues	13	4	3	6	16	27	15
Knights Academy	12	3	0	9	10	24	9
Albury Wodonga	14	2	2	10	18	49	8
Preston Lions	14	1	1	12	13	64	4

Federation Cup thriller in ACT

Gungahlin Juventus came back from being 3-0 down to defeat Belconnen United 4-3 in a thrilling second round match of the ACT Soccer Federation Cup at Riverside stadium on Sunday.

Belconnen were up 3-0 after 30 minutes after playing superb football. The young side's passing, running and defence was brilliant, leaving Juventus staring at a humiliating defeat.

Belconnen's first two goals were the result of brilliant lead up work and mistakes on the part of Juventus keeper Anthony Giannasca. In the sixth minute Giannasca fumbled a soft cross and Belconnen's Jason Dunn swooped on the crumbs to score. Six minutes later a weak clearance from Giannasca was intercepted by Daniel Camara, who showed great patience in committing Giannasca, then chipping the ball past him for Belconnen's second goal.

The Third came in the 30th minute when Turner crossed to Camara who angled the ball past Giannasca into the right side of the net for his second goal.

Juventus clawed one back before half-time through Steve Lazzari.

John Glass fired a hard shot which rebounded off Belconnen keeper Chris Freeman to Lazzari, who slotted the ball into the back of the net.

The game's turning point came 55 minutes in when Paulo Orefice was sent-off for bringing down Stocks right in front of goal as a last line of defence. At that point, Orefice had been one of Belconnen's best, and his dismissal left them a crucial player short.

Two minutes later Martin Lazzari fed Glass, who curled a beautiful shot past Freeman into the top left corner of the net.

Juventus finally equalized in the 72nd minute through Glass, this time from a free kick just outside the goal square. He hit an almost identical, curling shot which sliced into the top left corner.

Three minutes later Juventus were awarded a corner. Martin Lazzari's kick drifted past the far post to his brother Steve.

Steve headed the ball into the top left corner to put Juventus up for good.

Belconnen refused to submit and launched constant raids on the Juventus goal. In the final 10 minutes, Giannasca made three extraordinary saves on chances that had almost every right to go in. In the process, Giannasca showed why he is widely regarded as the best goal keeper in the Premier League.

Belconnen coach Lino Fiorese was obviously disappointed, while Juventus coach Ian Heywood was pleased with his side's character in coming back from 3-0 down.

"At halftime I asked them if they had the character to come back, and they did, which was very pleasing. It shows that this is a good team. That being said, the send off was what changed the game. From then on, we dominated and I think we deserved to win it," reflected Heywood.

Nathan Long was at the Riverside Stadium to watch ANU spring a major upset in the ACT Soccer Federation Cup when they defeated last season's premiers Monaro 2-0 on Sunday.

ANU were helped by Monaro having three players red carded in the second half after scores were locked at 0-0 at halftime.

Five minutes after halftime, Monaro's Brent Chick was penalised for a heavy tackle and ANU were awarded a free on the left sideline, about 30 metres from goal. Michael Wiseman took the kick and lofted a perfect ball into the goal square that Andrew Greenwood headed into the bottom left corner of the net.

Three minutes later was when Monaro's troubles really began. After a linesman's ruling went against them, Monaro defender John Nelson was given a red card for allegedly calling one of the officials a cheat.

Monaro replied by counter attacking, and only two great saves from ANU keeper Peter Popathanasiou prevented an equaliser.

In the 75th minute Monaro's Danny Macor was shown a yellow card for disputing a referees decision. Macor protested further by saying he was the captain and as such was entitled to ask questions. Macor kept arguing and was promptly shown another yellow card, followed by the red.

Four minutes later ANU exploited the holes in the short staffed Monaro defence to go up 2-0. Wiseman latched onto a long ball up the middle from his defence and dribbled to the right-hand front of the box.

He crossed to the far left of the box to Peter Limbrick who hammered a shot past Ian Jefferies into the right side of the net.

Two minutes after that, Lazar Simeonov recieved his second yellow card for disputing a referees decision. Combined with an earlier yellow for a late tackle in the fifth minute, Simeonov's dismissal left Monaro with 8 players.

For ANU, Wiseman and Popathanasiou were best on the field while Simeonov, Matthew Cachia and Matt Julliene played well for Monaro.

ANU coach Lars Koch believes his side was lucky to win considering the send-offs, but was pleased nonetheless. "We battled hard, because we don't have the ability that Monaro do. The win came about because of our excellent application throughout the game," he said

George Lemon went to see Tuggeranong United who have maintained their pre-season form with a 4-0 flogging of Weston Creek at Jamison in the 2nd of the WIN TV Federation Cup.

The victory has cemented United at the top of group A.

They only have to draw next week against Canberra Olympic to advance to the semi finals of the cup. Weston Creek's coach Robbie Graham took the defeat on the chin.

"The average age of my team out there was 18. We have lost a lot of players from last season and we are looking at re-building this season.

"I have nothing to be upset about, in

fact I was very pleased with the skills of the youngsters. And whats more, they never gave up," Graham said

Tuggeranong United were first on the scoreboard after a header to Mark Cerne from a corner kick. Tuggeranong were able to defend their 1-0 lead in what petered out to be a dour first half.

However, Tuggeranong quickly moved into top gear in the second half. In the 60th minute, Man of the Match Jason Warren-Smith calmly slotted the ball into the net after a clumsy clearance from the Creek's goalie.

Two further goals scored in the 80th and 85th minutes to Mark Conlon and Robert Schroeder respectively, ensured the united army had plenty to cheer about.

Tuggeranong United coach Graeme Plath was beaming after the match. "It was a pleasing victory. I was especially happy with our crossing and the fact that our first goal came from a set move that we have practicing in pre-season training," Plath said.

George Lemon reports that the Capital City Suns appear to be returning to the form that won them last season's premier league championship.

Down 3-1 at the break, the Suns hit sizzling form in the secondhalf to draw 3-3 with Canberra Olympic.

Goal scorers for Canberra Olympic were Robbie Perinovic, Daniel Raad and Simon Agnello. Micah Purdy and Stevie Lee (2) scored for the Suns. Lee's amazing goals and his allround performance have stamped him as a player to watch this season.

In the remaining games at Deakin oval, the young Burns Club side fought out a 1-1 draw with Canberra Deakin, while the White Eagles thumped the University of Canberra 5-0.

The later game saw White Eagles striker Garry van der Platt, a former Canberra player of the year, score a hat trick. Aleksic and Flores scored the other two goals.

BILL TURNER CUP COMING SOON TO INSIDE SOCCER



2000 Handbook & Draw



**LG BILL TURNER CUP
15 YEARS SOCCER**

And now it's the Bill Turner Cup Shield for Girls

As from 2000 the Bill Turner Cup will add a bit of variety to its competition with the 15 year girls school competition (at the moment limited to NSW) moving under its administrative umbrella.

The girls' competition (formerly 14 years and under) will join the organisation under a new competition to be known as the Bill Turner Shield.

After a number of months of negotiating the decision was made by an organising committee chaired by school soccer giant Lyndsay Hewison of Grantham High.

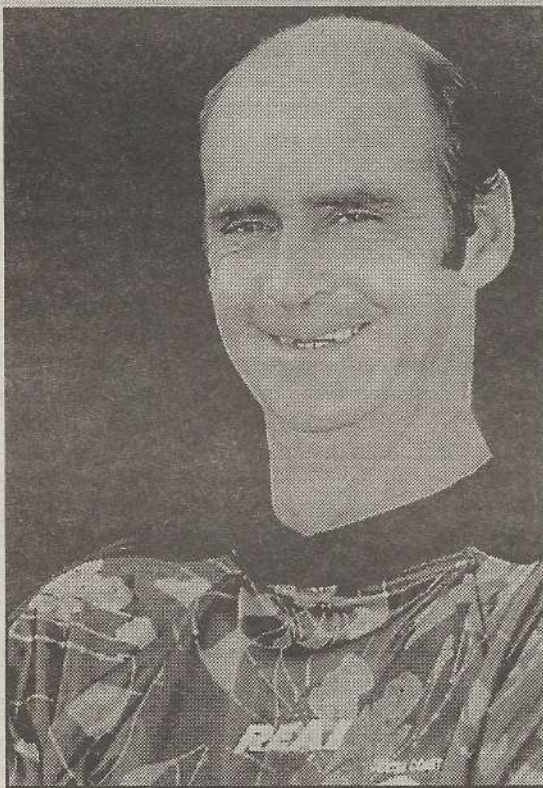
The committee believed that

the fact that the Bill Turner Cup has been running with great success for so long, it has the structure firmly in place to accommodate the girls' competition. Bill Turner said that this addition would derive mutual benefits.

Hewison said that he hoped that schools who had never played in the girls series before would begin to enter - an indication that this will be borne out is the fact that he is still receiving entries for 2000 in term one.

The original girls competition was started by Ron Pratt and Sue Andrews in 1990 and the two co-founders are fully supportive of this dramatic change.

Gary Meier? Now he is a legend



He quickly made a name for himself and was spotted by "Uncle Joe" Vlasits and was signed up by Pan Hellenic (now Sydney Olympic).

He played his initial first grade match at 16 and continued to play for that club for 20 years, during which he played over 1000 first grade matches including 297 National League games.

Gary has represented NSW many times between 1978 to 1981. He was also selected in the Australian U23 team in 1974 and the Australian team in 1979.

He toured Italy with the 'Australian 11' team in 1979-80 and England in 1981.

He played for Sydney Olympic and two NSW state finals, three National League finals and two National Cup finals.

Eight years ago he retired but could not help himself and started to play local amateur soccer for Killarney on the Central Coast of NSW.

In 1998 the Coasties ran into a goalkeeper problem.

The then coach Allan Bourke asked Meier 'to help out for a few games'.

He's still playing!

The keeper's reflexes are still as sharp as ever and his experience is

shown in every game.

He says he still has 'that fire in his belly' and his performances, especially this year, have been remarkable.

Even the Coasties' opponents have marvelled at 'the old man's' ability and cursed at his match winning efforts.

Recently he was appointed goalkeeper coach for the NSW Soccer Federation I.T.C. teams - he also coaches the Coasties' Cadets and Super Youth goalkeepers.

These young players will only benefit from Meiers teaching and experience. And being the gentleman that he is they will play the game in the correct manner and behave properly on the field of play.

When Meier joined the Coasties three years ago Bourke nicknamed him 'the legend'.

No better words could be used to

describe him some dictionaries describe a legend as a myth.

Gary Meier is certainly no myth and is, and has been, an ornament to the game of football.

It seems the young up and coming goalkeepers on the Central Coast will have to wait a few years yet to play first grade for the Coasties.

But while they wait they will be getting the best goalkeeping coaching they could wish for but they will all ask the same question: 'Gary, why don't you wear gloves?'

That, dear readers, is another story.



Eastern Suburbs turn around with big win over Saints

After weeks of looking 'almost there', Eastern Suburbs broke through for a much-needed win, soundly defeating a previously impeccable St George line-up, 2-5 at St George Stadium.

With Easts coach, John Calleja, promising a turn around in fortunes for some weeks, it all came together for the Eastern Suburbs outfit on Sunday with target man, Jimmy Aschner, scoring two goals, and Ekinici, Sharpley and Segreto chipping in for one each.

In other games, the derby thriller at the Serbian Centre, saw Bonnyrigg White Eagles get up in the 87th minute to win 4-3 against Fairfield Bulls, with substitute Leigh Gunn scoring with a free header inside the 6 yard box. Bonnyrigg led from an early goal by David Reid which was cancelled out by Fernando Pelligrino. Johnny Ghiso scored two for Bonnyrigg to have the home side sitting pretty at 3-1, but Fairfield came back strongly with further goals from substitute Marc Hoenselaars and Matthew Borg.

Sutherland improved by the length of the straight to pick up a valuable point at Lynwood Park against Macarthur Rams in 1-1 draw. Matt Merralls headed the Sharks into a 22nd minute lead after being recalled to the side in place of Craig Hobbs, but Macarthur drew level through Iain McDonald early in the second half.

Canterbury Marrickville continued their fall from grace. After a promising early start to the season, coach John Xipolitis' much-vaunted 'lady luck' appears to have deserted the Berries who went down to a clinical Central Coast, 0-2, at Henson Park. The second goal was scored in the dying minutes of the game. Spare a thought also for Canterbury's 18s side who have battled on without a win all season so far: 'lady luck' has well and truly deserted them also with no less than five first-team players out with long-term injuries.

In other matches, Parramatta Eagles' Adam Anderson scored two second half goals to dent Blacktown City's hopes of maintaining the Super League lead; while Bankstown City scored three goals in the first half for a comfortable win over Penrith Panthers who languish at the bottom of the pack.

SUPER LEAGUE SOCCER THIS SATURDAY NIGHT 11TH MARCH

PLUIM PARK, LISAROW

CENTRAL COAST
COASTIES



V
PARRAMATTA
EAGLES



SEE THE CLASH OF SUPER LEAGUE'S
HOTTEST TEAMS OF THE SEASON

FIRST GRADE 6PM - UNDER 21 4PM - UNDER 18 2PM

ADULTS \$10 - STUDENT ENTRY \$5
KIDS UNDER 16 FREE
COASTIES SEASON TICKETS
AVAILABLE AT GATE

Super Youth League ... it's superb!

Mark Bosnich, Paul Okon, Harry Kewell, Craig Moore, Hayden Foxe, Zeljko Kalac, Mark Schwarzer and Johnny Warren

What do all of these players have in common apart from being Soccerroo representatives?

They are all products of the New South Wales Soccer Federation's Super Youth and Super Cadet League - that is, the elite competition for boys aged 11-16 (inclusive) in New South Wales.

In Season 2000, all NSW Super League and NSL Clubs (with the exception of Parramatta Power) will field teams in the Pepsi Super Youth and Pepsi Super Cadet competition. The big picture view is that these Clubs can and do provide a six-year football education for their players, and also establishes a gateway to selection in representative teams and Super and National League honours. For example, Australian Under-17 representative Brad Groves progressed to Leeds United's under-19 side via Parramatta Eagles youth and the NSWIS.

The quest for glory kicks-off this weekend with ten matches across the State with some of the Clubs competing being the envy of talent scouts worldwide.

For example, Blacktown City is the West Ham United Soccer Academy and has a rich history of producing extraordinary talent. Several hand-picked players from Blacktown's roster will also train at Upton Park (West Ham's home ground in London) later this year.

Northern Spirit's youth system employs the

Ajax Amsterdam method of training and has utilised psychographic profiles in establishing suitable on-field positions for various players.

Central Coast has started a tradition of producing high-class youth internationals, in particular, Jess Van Stratten of the Joeys and Leeds United and England starlet Jamie McMaster.

Sydney Olympic has a quality production line that stretches beyond the horizon and no wonder when the calibre of coaches such as ex-National League player Peter Katholos, puts the under-11s through their paces.

The likes of Zeljko Kalac, David Zdrilic, and Ante Milcic, who formed the mighty Sydney United teams of the mid-1990s, were all products of the youth system at Edensor Park and now have all been snapped up by big European Clubs.

Sutherland has former Soccerroo John O'Shea overseeing development in arguably the richest area of junior talent in the country.

Where did Steve and Mark Waugh learn to break the spirit of their opposition? Why, Bankstown City Cubs of course!

The hierarchies at Clubs are also clueing to the fact how important the youth grades are by making their players feel part of the tradition. For example, both Canterbury Marrickville and Leichhardt Tigers had Black Tie Extravaganzas welcoming the youngsters to the Club in Season 2000.

And finally, Pepsi continue to show their genuine support of the world game, by committing to this great competition at this important junior level for the next FIVE seasons.

It's the Bruni and Karavatakis show!

LEICHHARDT TIGERS 7 Karavatakis 10, 66, 75, Bruni 14, 39, 71, 86. MANLY-WARRINGAH 0

At Lambert Park, Leichhardt.

By Ben Cubby

Leichhardt Tigers clawed their way back to the top of the NSW Super League on Sunday night with a merciless 7-0 thrashing of Manly-Warringah.

Amazingly, the formidable Leichhardt strike combination of Joe Bruni and Steve Karavatakis scored all seven goals between them.

The lethal Bruni hit the target four times, while captain Karavatakis merely settled for a hat-trick.

At a rainy, windswept Lambert Park, the out-of-sorts Dolphins lineup was cut to pieces time and time again by the home side.

Many predicted a better showing from the visitors, especially after last rounds' battling win over Bankstown, but they found the Tigers in a savage mood.

Leichhardt winger Chris Lansdown relished a rare appearance in the starting eleven, popping up on either flank and constantly outpacing the Manly defence.

His low cross hit the post in the 10th minute and rebounded out into the path of Karavatakis, who smashed in the opening goal.

Four minutes later, Bruni notched Leichhardt's second, holding off Steve Hickman's challenge to slot home after Dolphin's 'keeper Dean McCreath had parried another Lansdown shot.

The Tigers continued to dominate, but Manly did well to regroup after the horror start and carve out a few opportunities of their own.

Scott McGuire sent a couple of shots just wide of the Leichhardt goal and Andre Glucina's long-range effort drew a fine save from Shaun Woods in the 38th minute.

In the 39th, though, Leichhardt went further ahead when Hickman - the last Dolphins defender - slipped on the wet turf, allowing Bruni to dispossess him and stroke in number three.

Manly remained on the back foot after the half-time break, although the midfield combination of Keith Long and former Preston North End player David Turnbull showed some moments of

class.

Their good work came to nothing when Leichhardt profited from another defensive lapse in the 66th minute.

No one wanted to put in a challenge on Karavatakis when he jinked through the Dolphins backline and the ex-Wollongong forward had time to place a low, hard shot into the corner of the net.

Bruni then nabbed the fifth goal, after playing a slick one-two with his captain.

McCreath did well to turn away powerful shots from Zoki Adioski and impressive substitute Greg Fuchs, as the rampant Tigers went hunting for a cricket score.

Vuko Tomasevic - just back from a sojourn to Italy with the Marconi youth team - beat the 'keeper but not the post in the 73rd minute.

Shortly afterward, Karavatakis turned the unfortunate Hickman inside out before curling a fabulous shot into the top corner for his tenth goal of the season.

Bruni completed the rout in the 86th minute, dribbling through the demoralised Manly defence to score number seven.

The Leichhardt forward line was simply too hot for the Dolphins to handle on this occasion.

The fact that regulars Michael Galluzzo, Yane Talceviski and Blago Milicevic were missing from the Tigers' team sheet is an indication of the depth of talent at the club this year.

Apart from the goalscorers, Lansdown, Tomasevic and veteran stopper Chris Cowley turned in good performances for the victors.

Manly were ruthlessly punished for a few defensive errors, but they played some good football despite the embarrassing scoreline.

The form of McCreath, Turnbull and Under-21's player Anthony Martin was encouraging in this encounter.

With St. George going down to Eastern Suburbs and Blacktown held to a draw at Parramatta, Les DeCelis' men are now a point clear at the top of the ladder.

Leichhardt Tigers: Woods, Macolino (Fuchs 72), Dowling, Tomasevic, Lansdown (Lal 72), Stubbs-Mills, Bruni, Karavatakis, Nicol, Adioski, Cowley.

Manly-Warringah: McCreath, Glucina, Long (Jaegers 79), Beldham, McGuire (Smithies 85), Turnbull, Hickman, D. Webb, S. Webb (Mikulski 57), Pettenon, Martin.

Super League Tables

FIRST GRADE:	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
LEICHHARDT TIGERS	9	6	1	2	26	14	19	12
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	6	0	3	26	19	18	7
Central Coast Coasties	9	5	2	2	17	10	17	7
Blacktown City Demons	9	5	1	3	26	9	16	17
St George Saints	9	5	1	3	17	13	16	4
Parramatta Eagles	9	4	3	2	20	14	15	6
Bankstown City Lions	9	4	3	2	15	9	15	6
Canterbury Marrickville	9	4	0	5	14	24	12	-10
Macarthur Rams	9	2	4	3	13	13	10	0
Eastern Suburbs	9	3	0	6	14	17	9	-3
Manly Warringah Dolphins	9	2	3	4	11	20	9	-9
Fairfield Bulls	9	2	2	5	13	17	8	-4
Sutherland Sharks	9	2	1	6	11	26	7	-15
Penrith Panthers	9	2	1	6	7	25	7	-18

UNDER 21	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	GD
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS	9	5	3	1	19	12	18	7
Central Coast Coasties	9	6	2	1	16	8	20	8
Leichhardt Tigers	9	5	1	3	17	14	16	3
Penrith Panthers	9	6	0	3	23	17	18	6
Parramatta Eagles	9	4	2	3	16	13	14	3
St George Saints	9	3	4	2	15	8	13	7
Manly Warringah Dolphins	9	4	1	4	19	17	13	2
Macarthur Rams	9	3	1	5	11	20	10	-9
Eastern Suburbs	9	2	4	3	16	18	10	-2
Canterbury Marrickville	9	3	0	6	16	23	9	-7
Sutherland Sharks	9	3	3	3	14	19	12	-5
Fairfield Bulls	9	2	2	5	13	18	8	-5
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	2	3	4	11	15	9	-4
Bankstown City Lions	9	1	2	6	16	20	5	-4

UNDER 18	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
BLACKTOWN CITY	9	6	2	1	18	8	20	10
Parramatta Eagles	9	7	1	1	27	9	22	18
Fairfield Bulls	9	7	0	2	21	11	21	10
Leichhardt Tigers	9	6	2	1	24	14	20	10
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	4	2	3	13	8	14	5
Central Coast Coasties	9	4	2	3	21	16	14	5
Macarthur Rams	9	3	3	3	11	12	12	-1
Bankstown City Lions	9	3	2	4	12	19	11	-7
Eastern Suburbs	9	2	4	3	13	20	10	-7
Sutherland Sharks	9	2	3	4	12	11	9	1
Penrith Panthers	9	2	4	3	12	10	10	2
St George Saints	9	1	3	5	10	30	6	-20
Manly Warringah Dolphins	9	1	0	8	7	16	3	-9
Canterbury Marrickville	9	0	2	7	7	24	2	-17

FIRST GRADE: SUPER LEAGUE

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 4
D Reid 9m, J Ghiso 41/57m, L Gunn 89m.
FAIRFIELD BULLS 3
F Pelligrino 28m, M Hoenselaars 59m, M Borg 71m.
MACARTHUR RAMS 1
I McDonald 47m.
SUTHERLAND SHARKS 1
M Merralls 22m.
ST GEORGE SAINTS 2
A Petros 52m, G Maglis 54m.
EASTERN SUBURBS 5
Y Ekinci 2m, C Sharpley 6m, J Aschner 30/46m, D Segreto 33m.
CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE 0
CENTRAL COAST 2
P Roberts 33m, C Roper 89m.
PARRAMATTA EAGLES 2
A Anderson 48/84m.
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS 1
C Bradley 7m.
PENRITH PANTHERS 0
BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 3
G Trposki 8m, M Lemazina 39m, R Issa 42m.
LEICHHARDT TIGERS 7
S Karavatakis 11/65/76m, J Bruni 17/40/73/87m.
MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHINS 0

UNDER 21:
Bonnyrigg White Eagles 3
Macarthur Rams 1
St George Saints 1
Canterbury Marrickville 1
Parramatta Eagles 2
Fairfield Bulls 2
Sutherland Sharks 2
Eastern Suburbs 1
Central Coast 5
Blacktown City 2

Penrith Panthers 3
Leichhardt Tigers 0
Bankstown Lions 2
Manly Warringah 2

UNDER 18:
Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1
Macarthur Rams 1
St George Saints 3
Canterbury Marrickville 0
Parramatta Eagles 3
Penrith Panthers 3
Leichhardt Tigers 1
Fairfield Bulls 2
Sutherland Sharks 1
Eastern Suburbs 3
Central Coast 2
Blacktown City 2
Bankstown Lions 1
Manly Warringah 0

WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE ROUND THREE RESULTS

NSW Institute Sport/Acad 8
Macarthur Rams 2
Northern NSW/HAS 5
Sutherland Sharks 5
Wollongong Wolves 0
Nepean Association 1
Manly Warringah 1
Marconi 2
Central Coast 0
Gladesville 0

ROUND FOUR DRAW

Sunday 12 March

Nepean Association v Macarthur Rams
Cook Park St Marys 6:00 PM 4:00 PM
NNorthern NSW/HAS v Manly Warringah Dolphins
Jack McLaughlin Oval 7:00 PM 5:00 PM
Marconi v Wollongong Wolves
Marconi No 2 7:30 PM 5:30 PM
Central Coast Lakers v NSW Inst Sport/Academy
Budgewoi Soccer Field 6:00 PM
Gladesville Ravens v Sutherland Sharks TBA

SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND TEN

Saturday 11 March

Sutherland Sharks v Canterbury M'ville - Seymour Shaw Park

Game 7.00pm (1st grade)-5.00pm (21s)-3.00pm (18s)

Central Coast Coasties v Parramatta Eagles - Plum Park

Blacktown City Demons v Leichhardt Tigers - Gabbie Stadium

Games 6.00pm (1st grade)-4.00pm (21s)-2.00pm (18s).

Sunday 12 March

Bankstown City Lions v St George Saints - Jensen Park

Eastern Suburbs v Bonnyrigg White Eagles - Wentworth Park

Fairfield Bulls v Macarthur Rams - Nineveh Field

Manly Warringah Dolphins v Penrith Panthers - Cromer Park

Games 5.00pm (1st grade)-3.00pm (21s)-1.00pm (18s).

Catch all the latest news on football in
NSW in **Super Soccer OUT 9 March!**

www.soccernsw.com.au

MARCONI STALLIONS 0 PARRAMATTA POWER 2

Sterjovski 59, 68.

Wednesday night at Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 3,319.

Deferred game

MATCH STATS:



MARCONI STALLIONS:

Aceski, Farah, Babic M, Longo, Gibson (Invincible, 63), Renaud, Care, Maloney, Zoric Trajanovski (Karl 71), Duric 45 (Babic Z 66).



PARRAMATTA POWER:

Gibson, Plesa, Vrkic, Byrnes, Barrett, Eagleton, Berry, Gibson, Laybutt (Griffiths 66), Burns, Sterjovski (Townsend 79).

Yellow:

Stallions: Longo 42, Farah 45, Renaud 88.

Power: Vrkic 82.

Best Players:

3. PLESA (POWER)

2. Burns (Power)

1. Sterjovski (Power)

By John Vrtaric

This was a crunch game for the inconsistent Power team as they chase the front running pack. To the relief of their frustrated coach David Mitchell they put on possible their best performance of the season to inflict a 2-0 defeat of a lacklustre Marconi.

Marconi, one of the current form teams, suffered their first loss after seven undefeated games, including a 2-1 away defeat of champions South Melbourne.

Marconi's coach Eddie Krncevic was at a loss to explain his team's lack of effort but couldn't rule out the affect of the game against South Melbourne played on a heavy pitch only a three days earlier.

Many coaches, if not most losing ones, lament after the game that it could have been different if their team had taken the goal scoring opportunities presented to them. And so it was in this game as Marconi had a clear opportunity in the very first minute.

A corner from the left was back-headed on the near post by Marconi striker Alex Duric to the unmarked Mark Babic who had a clear shot on goal but, being a central defender, perhaps he lacked the instinct of a striker and his half volley flew over the bar.

After a couple of half chances to the visitors the home team had another chance in the 17th minute with Babic again involved.

On this occasion he ventured forward and delivered a unexpected cross from the right to Duric who had eluded his marker and was presented with a clear sight of Gibson's goal. But he mis-timed his header and merely managed to glance it past the far post.

The lack of finishing proved to be costly to Krncevic's team as Power soon took control of the game and Marconi went into hibernation only emerging from it late in the game when substitutes Sean Babic and Harry Karl instilled some energy into their performance.

Though Power dominated the rest of the first half they created few, if any, clear chances. A number of half chances were created without either Mile Sterjovski or makeshift striking partner Jacob Burns

looking as if they were going to break through. On a couple of occasions Power was assisted by an uncertain

Marconi goal-keeper, David Aceski, who, later in the match, could have done better with both Power goals.

The clearest chance they had was right on the stroke of half time when a Richard Plesa free-kick was headed into the path of Sterjovski who smashed the ball as it bounced perfectly for his right foot but Aceski saved well.

Power started dominating the second half soon after Duric muffed another glancing header opportunity.

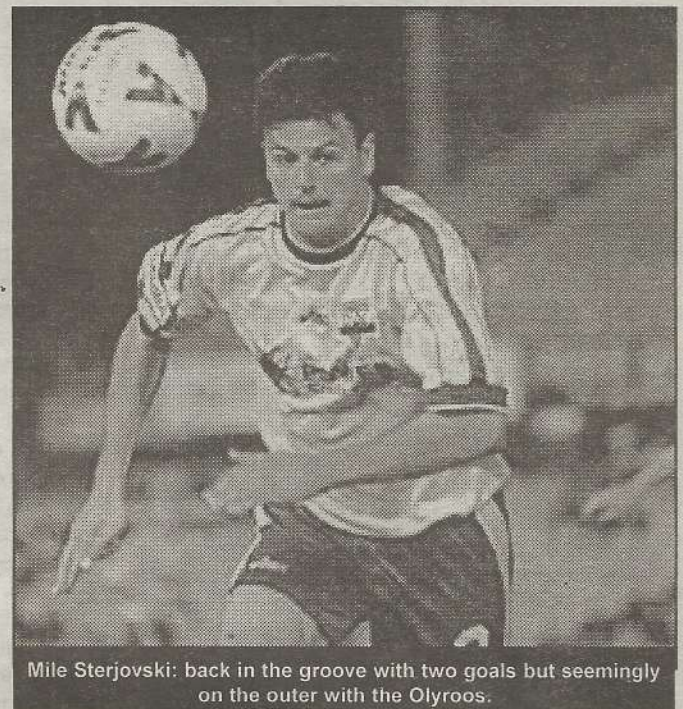
A move involving the Power striking partners saw the ball end up with Sterjovski in the 53rd minute, he beat Brendan Renaud inside the box but the Stallions defender left his left foot lingering and Sterjovski managed to trip over it and earn himself a penalty.

Sterjovski took the penalty himself but hit a weak shot to Aceski's right who saved with relative ease.

Fortunately for Sterjovski's confidence he was soon to make amends for his miss.

In the 59th minute a David Barrett cross from the right was headed back across the goal by Steve Berry and Sterjovski managed to beat both Aceski and a Marconi defender to loop a header into the Stallions goal.

For the next ten minutes the game went into a lull but in the 73rd minute



Mile Sterjovski: back in the groove with two goals but seemingly on the outer with the Olyroos.

Power scored its second goal and put the match out of the reach of Marconi.

A long throw in from Berry was headed towards substitute Joel Griffiths whose first time side volley was deflected into the air. In a jumping duel between Sterjovski and Aceski the striker surprisingly won the battle and headed the ball into the empty goal.

Karl and Sean Babic combined on a couple of occasions late in the game to cause some consternation to the Power defence but were unable to break through.

Burns had a swerving outside of the foot shot saved by Aceski's left post before the game concluded with a Sean Babic's pace beating Mark Byrnes but his finishing lacked accuracy as his shot flew high over Gibson's bar.

Cavaliers go marching on

Green Gully Cavaliers 4

og 12, Sevin 32, Becvinovski 52, Svigos 73.

Oakleigh Cannons 0

Sunday night at Green Gully Reserve, Kealba.

By Markian Jaworsky

This was a match that Green Gully could not lose, and a few wagers had been made on the result. Not in terms of the winner, but by how much?

Oakleigh made the trip to Melbourne's West, with a suspect defence and they could not have played the league leaders at a worse time.

There was drama in the Oakleigh penalty box after just twelve minutes.

A George Svigos corner to the near post exposed the Oakleigh defense for the first time, creating an awful scramble. Just about every man and their dog had swung in the boot and after a good thirty seconds, linesman Alex Nikolovski ran back to the halfway line knowing full well in his mind that the ball had crossed the line for Cavaliers first of the night.

However referee Dominic Barba wasn't quite on the same wavelength for a short period of time and let play continue until he finally acknowledged his second assistant and called for the kick-off to

restart play.

Green Gully goalkeeper Robert Brian was almost exposed after twenty minutes of play. Running out to meet a ball he was never going to claim, he made his way back to his line, only to simply stand and watch Oakleigh's Nick Georgakopoulos take a coat of paint off the bottom of the back post from a sweet drive from just outside the penalty box.

If any indication is needed as to the sort of problems the Oakleigh defence has, look no further than Sonny Sevin's goal for Green Gully after 32 minutes.

In what appeared to be a harmless floating freekick from the halfway line, Oakleigh keeper Nick Koletsas ran out and clashed violently with his own defender George Daoulas, leaving Sonny's freekick bouncing four times before eventually hitting the back off the net.

Total confusion, total calamity.

Nick Koletsas did produce some fine saves, and none more so than from Steven Douglas' bending outside of the foot smash on the edge of the penalty area late in the first half, and again from Sash Becvinovski, after good work from George Svigos early in the second half.

Oakleigh substitute Muriziu Pagnello made a clumsy challenge inside the penalty area on Green Gully's George Svigos, referee Barba had no doubt in his mind and pointed to the spot for a penalty.

Barba has been credited as being a good referee amongst current officials prior to this match and he lived up to his good reputation tonight. It was a short-lived experience for Muriziu who was substituted off after only ten minutes of coming onto the ground. Sash Becvinovski made no mistake from the penalty to make it three-nil to the home side.

Oakleigh striker Juan Sastre offered some resistance to the cause of his club, and after some neat first touches, he fired off a cracker of a shot that cannoned back off the top of the Green Gully crossbar, an effort most deserving of a goal.

But it was not to be, five minutes later, Tony Neceseki's cross found George Svigos who volleyed onto the post, following up his own rebound and hammering in the fourth of the night for the Cavaliers.

Green Gully dominated possession for most of the night, and simply worked the ball around until they found the right opening, in total contrast to Oakleigh who struggled to actually string any more than three or four consecutive passes at any one time.

Sonny Sevin had an excellent game on the right wing, together with George Svigos, but in all a polished performance from the reigning Victorian champions.

The mood amongst the Green Gully faithful is definitely of back to back titles and with five wins from their first five games, and now five points clear at the top, it is hard to see anyone stop the club from



Green Gully's Sonny Sevin. The former NSL star is helping lead the charge at Gully.

achieving that.

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS: Brian, Atanasovski, Becvinovski, Donev (Kutlesovski 64), Douglas, Georgiadis, Markovski, Mangos, Sevin, Svigos, Vassallo (Neceseki66).

OAKLEIGH CANNONS: Koletsas, Tsiakos, Rosman, Daoulas (Pagnello 45 (Alagiozidis 55)), Aretis, Harbis, Nalpantidis, Strapelias, Georgakopoulos, Karagiannis (Murne 74), Sastre.

Referee: Dominic Barba.

Yellows: Oakleigh: Alagiozidis, Rosman.

Best Players:

3. SONNY SEVIN (GREEN GULLY)

2. George Svigos (Green Gully)

1. Juan Sastre (Oakleigh Cannons)

JPK inspires Sharks to Magic victory

Port Melbourne Sharks 3

Tsaltas 16", Knezevic 44", 85".

Altona Magic 2

Todorovski 75", Jolevski 89".

Friday night at Anderson Reserve, Port Melbourne.

By Mark Fisher

Port Melbourne survived a late George Jolevski-inspired rally on Friday night, courtesy of an outstanding performance by John Paul Knezevic, who stole the show with both rugged resistance at the back and an equally determined frame of mind in attack.

JPK fashioned his side's victory by nailing himself a couple of goals, and for most of the match was able to hold together a defensive line with the assistance of ex-Carlton player Serdar Pir and Tommy Sonsini.

Altona played in such a way that they might sneak a point late in the match, but the home side resisted and held their concentration just long enough to see the result out.

Port had all the running early in the

game. Damon Collina had a double-barrelled chance all to himself when he collected a deft through-ball from Zlatko Mihaljovic at the edge of the area, but he struck the ball directly into the sliding goal-keeper Darren McGrath.

The ball fell back to Collina to shoot again, but McGrath by this time had cut down the opening and the second shot fell safely away.

The defensive plan this time round for Port was to ensure they would not be caught napping on the break by the Magic. As soon as possession was lost, the Sharks pulled back quickly, and at stages had nine men behind the ball with only

first half. Port Melbourne must have been mindful of how Heidelberg destroyed them on the break at home two rounds earlier, and what you saw this time was a Sharks side desperate not to see history repeat itself a fortnight later.

Initially, Sash Nicolovic drove Port into attack, finding left and right midfielders in space. Mihaljovic, still improving as the season wears on, worked well just behind the two strikers in his central attacking midfield position, and had the vision to offer them opportunities in and around the area on a regular basis.

Yet it was from the flanks that Port looked most potent overall.

On the left side Poutakidis earned a free kick, and sent the ball high into the centre of the area. Nick Tsaltas judged his header to perfection, and nodded in from a slightly deep position inside the area to put the home side up 1-0 after 16 minutes.

John Paul Knezevic then put himself into goal scoring positions to net the Sharks two more, on both occasions heading home from John Pappas corner kicks.

Jolevski was involved in providing the Magic with some late replies. He fired in a corner that Toni Trifunov couldn't put away, yet the rebound fell for Zoran Todorovski to slot in.

Jolevski scored an 89th minute consolation goal when he headed in from a Slave Bozinovski corner from the right.

Time ran out for Altona, however, and Port Melbourne realised that they were more than equal to the challenge offered this time by the usually defiant Altona Magic.



Nick Tsaltas: opened the scoring for the Sharks on Friday night at Port Melbourne.

PORT MELBOURNE: Roche, Sonsini, Pir, Knezevic, Papadopoulos (Tzirtis 75"), Poutakidis, Nicolovic, Pappas, Mihaljovic, Tsaltas (Dimas 85"), Collina.

HEIDELBERG UNITED: McGrath, Ristevski (Mrkela 28"), Jolevski, Micevski, Bozinovski, Lisolajski, Stojcevi, Trifunov, Cvetanovski, Todorovski, Josevski

Best Players:

3. KNEZEVIC (PORT MELBOURNE)
2. Jolevski (Altona Magic)
1. Mihaljovic (Port Melbourne)

Referee: Carlo Brazier

FIRST GRADE:

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS 3

Knezevic 2, Tsaltas.
ALTONA MAGIC 2
Todorovski, Jolevski.

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 4

Sevin, Becvinovski, Svigos, own goal.
OAKLEIGH CANNONS 0

FAWKNER BLUES 1

Psarros.
ST ALBANS SAINTS 1
Sianidis.

PRESTON LIONS 4

Panev 3, Everetts.
HEIDELBERG UNITED 2
Tsonis, Opazo.

ALTONA EAST PHOENIX 0 BULLEEN ZEBRAS 0

BENTLEIGH GREENS 2
Micheil, Karapatsos.
MELBOURNE RAIDERS 2
Salievski, Boschini.

RESERVES:

Port Melbourne 3 Altona Magic 3

Green Gully 5 Oak. Cannons 1

Fawkner Blues 3 St Albans Saints 3

Preston Lions 11 Heidelberg United 1

Altona East 2 Bulleen Zebras 1

Bentleigh 5 M'bourne Raiders 0

FIRST GRADE

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS

Altona East Phoenix

St Albans Saints

Preston Lions

Bentleigh Greens

Fawkner Blues

Port Melb. Sharks

Melbourne Raiders

Bulleen Zebras

Altona Magic

Oakleigh Cannons

Heidelberg United

P W D L F A P

5 5 0 0 16 2 15

5 3 1 1 5 5 10

5 2 2 1 11 8 8

5 2 2 1 9 7 8

5 2 1 2 8 5 7

5 2 1 2 5 6 7

5 2 0 3 10 13 6

5 1 2 2 6 7 5

5 1 2 2 6 8 5

5 1 2 2 7 10 5

5 1 1 3 4 10 4

5 1 0 4 8 14 3

RESERVES

BENTLEIGH GREENS

Port Melb. Sharks

Green Gully Cav

St Albans Saints

Altona East Phoenix

Fawkner Blues

Preston Lions

Melbourne Raiders

Altona Magic

Heidelberg United

Oakleigh Cannons

Bulleen Zebras

P W D L F A P

5 4 0 1 21 3 12

5 3 2 0 13 7 11

5 3 1 1 16 6 10

5 2 3 0 11 6 9

5 2 2 1 7 9 8

5 2 1 2 12 15 7

5 1 3 1 18 10 6

5 1 2 2 12 13 5

5 1 2 2 11 16 5

5 0 3 2 5 19 3

5 0 2 3 4 17 2

5 0 1 4 7 16 1

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE



ROUND SIX

Friday 10 March

Oakleigh v Port Melbourne Sharks

Jack Edwards Reserve - 8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

Saturday 11 March

Altona Magic v Fawkner Blues - Paisley Reserve

8.00(First Grade)/6.00(Reserves)

Sunday 12 March

St Albans Saints v Preston Lions - Churchill Reserve

5.00(First Grade)/3.00(Reserves)

Monday 13 March

Bulleen Zebras v Bentleigh Greens - Veneto Club

Heidelberg United v Altona East Phoenix - Olympic Village

Melbourne Raiders v Green Gully Cavaliers - Epping Stadium

All Games - 8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

READERS' FORUM

What other country uses three rounds? Scotland did; however it did not last long!

Although the move to have 33 games (three rounds) is good, there are three major problems as follows:

a) Home ground advantage: Results from last season show that the home team wins more points at home. Therefore, the teams that play 17 games at home will have an advantage over the teams that play 16 games at home.

In addition, a team at the top of the table would like to play the top six teams at home and the five bottom teams away to have a further advantage.

b) Financial difficulties: Although the cash gate is easily divided into two for the 11 games of the third round, there are problems with season ticket holders and life members.

How do the accountants value the season ticket, when the holder usually purchases the ticket at a discount, because the holder probably does not attend all games?

Did the life member pay a lump cash sum? At the ground, there may be a raffle. What proceeds belong to the away team? A similar problem exists with programmes and other merchandise like shires. At the canteen, a profit is made.

Most canteens buy non-perishable items in bulk a few times a season. An accountants nightmare to establish the canteen profit each match.

c) Play-offs: It is possible to have two play-off matches in the same city on the same weekend. A case of the NSL competing against the NSL for the entertainment dollar.

Two teams can play three games against each other; however, only the last game really counted. Win two, lose one; but still lose.

Is the three round system fair? No!

Is the pay-off system fair? No!

Regular Season Alternative.

The alternative is to have two divisions of six teams. Each team would play each other team (that is, play sides in both divisions) on a home and away basis to give 22 rounds (2x11).

Sides would play each other team in their division on a home and away basis to give 10 rounds (2x5).

This is a total of 32 games, which is similar to the proposed 3 rounds (3x11) of 33 games.

The divisions based upon geographical proximity are suggested as follows:

Northern: Brisbane, Canberra, Newcastle, Wollongong, Sydney 1,2 and 3.

Southern: New Zealand, Victoria 1 and 2, Adelaide and Perth.

Play-offs Alternative.

For the play-offs, the top four teams in each division may participate as follows: The semi-finals would be home and away 1v4 and 2v3 for each division.

The division final would be the winner of 1v4 against the winner of 2v3 home and away for each division. The grand final would be between the division winners.

This system involves 5 rounds like the present set-up; however, greater participation occurs with 8 teams instead of 6 teams, and 13 games instead of 9 games.

Advantages.

The advantages are summarized as follows:

1) Derby games: the number of games between teams in the same city will increase from 12 to 16, since teams in the same city would play in the same division (hence better crowds which equal more income).

The additional derby games will involve less

travelling, which means saving on cost and time for both club and travelling fans.

2) More winners: Two division winners instead of one minor premier. Since the fans like to follow a winning team, this will create greater crowds. In addition, fans prefer to follow a team that is no lower than sixth rather than twelfth.

3) Sponsorship: The possibility exists of obtaining individual sponsors for each of the divisions. A sponsor may not want an Australian wide sponsorship, but may take a northern or southern division.

In fact, the make-up of the divisions could be arranged to suit a sponsor's need.

4) Legitimate play-off series: After the regular schedule there is no overall winner so that a play-off series is required.

An increase in the number of teams is desirable to keep the regular season interesting for more teams till later in the regular season. The divisional play-off games will create more derby games and may establish state winners.

In addition, there is a steady build-up towards the grand final.

In the grand final, each fan will have a geographic team to support.

Comparison.

The loss of one round (six games) is more than compensated for by the additional 4 play-off games and additional four derby games. A dislike of a divisional set-up has been that there are too many teams; however, this scheme involves exactly the same number of teams.

A further dislike of a divisional set-up is that it is not traditional. At present, the proposed 3 round league scheme (league plus play-offs) is neither a European set-up (league only), nor an American set-up (division/conference plus play-offs).

No tradition here. The alternative avoids the three listed problems, but the four listed advantages!

Why not give it a go!

Dr Peter Bayliss,
Professor
(Emeritus),
Central Coast, NSW

Just a short note to let you know that after the Wolves home game, as always, everyone returned to the Fraternity Bowling and Recreation Club for the post-match feed, drinks and presentation.

To the fans' surprise, the whole Football Kingz team joined the Wolves in the bistro area and even contributed to the presentation via a speech by the Kingz coach, and Oceania Player of the Century, Wynton Rufer.

And I have to say the man is a class act not only on the field but off.

Not many coaches would act so sportingly after a defeat but the man went on to congratulate the Wolves team and even singled out certain players for their efforts.

I must say I felt privileged to be present to witness such a gesture - many other coaches should take a leaf out of his book.

New Zealand should be proud of such an ambassador and I feel *Inside Soccer* readers should know about his diplomatic efforts because it's a side of the game few people get to see.

While I am a Wolves and Socceroo supporter to the bone, I can't help but feel a little won over and sympathetic to, dare I say it, a New Zealand based team in the Auckland Kingz.

Sandro Colantoni
Wollongong, NSW.

Chay Hews



With Melissa



Chay Hews has long been regarded as one of Queensland's finer products. A spell in Japan proving that the Striker has got the goods to make an impression overseas.

Just weeks after his arrival back from Hiratsuka, Japan, *Inside Soccer's* Melissa Muscat caught up with Chay and discovered what kind of experience playing in the J-League really was, how Japan was as a country and the cultural side of being in Nippon.

Melissa: What were your thoughts on Japan itself? Was it hard to settle in, adapting to the language etc?

Chay: It was very hard with the language and the weather was hot and humid. Over in the J-League, extra time would be played if it was a draw.

I suppose our translator made it easier at training, but even something as simple as ordering a meal was hard. We had to point.

The good thing was that it was full time and I was doing something that I enjoyed.

M: Was it easier having a team mate in Steve Laybutt (left)?

C: Definitely. Steve really enjoyed the football. The only bad thing was, on outings we couldn't joke because we had to explain slowly to the others what we were on about.

M: Are you a converted sushi lover?

C: No, I can't get used to sushi but I tried raw octopus which I liked. I ate a lot of noodles and rice while I was over there.

M: Did this experience improve your game? If so, how did you gain or benefit?

C: Training full time every day I felt a lot sharper and fitter. I loved the idea of playing full time.

M: Would you consider going back to Japan to pursue a permanent career?

C: I would like to play another full season there, but I'm not sure about a permanent stay.

When I was over there, I didn't realise how nice and relaxed it is here in Australia.

M: How is the professionalism of the game in Japan different to that in Australia?

C: Three or four years ago Soccer was the biggest game in Japan but now Baseball has taken over and the crowds have dropped. We averaged about 6,000 per game but some teams got 20,000. The advertising and marketing is pretty good.

A couple of teams even have their own TV channel.

M: Did this force you to live a different life socially than how you would living in Australia? Were there any sacrifices?

C: There were no restrictions but before and after the game it was pretty serious.

There was no going out. We usually trained the next day. There were no nightclubs or bars where we lived, the closest was about half an hour away. In terms of food, I'm not really fond of Japanese but there were American and Italian style places which we ate at, so that was good.

Before the season started, the team also met with a nutritionist.

It's good to be back, I really enjoy playing in Brisbane. A better incentive is that we're definitely going to make the top six!





Inside Soccer's NSL ALL-STARS

FEBRUARY 2000



2: Scott Baillie
Sydney Olympic



1: Paul Henderson
Northern Spirit



5: Mark Byrnes
Parra Power



3: Ivan Vicelich
Football Kingz



7: Brett Emerton
Sydney Olympic



4: Andy Vargas
Gippsland Falcons



8: Ivo de Jesus
Canberra Cosmos



6: Mark Silic
Melbourne Knights



11: Nick Meredith
Brisbane Strikers



10: Andy Harper
Newcastle Breakers



9: John Buonavoglia
Newcastle Breakers

SQUAD MEMBERS

PJ Roberts Cosmos
Pablo Cardozo Olympic
Stuart Young Wolves
Con Boutsianis Glory
Archie Thompson Carlton
Andy Vlahos South
Marcus Stergiopoulos Kingz
Nick Carle Olympic
Christian Care Marconi
Matthew Kemp Adelaide Force
Dion Valle Glory
Chris Jones South
Andy Roberts Breakers
Dino Mennillo Wolves

IS selectors explain their choices

Another exciting and attacking line-up has been chosen by the under-fire IS selectors. "We want to win and play sexy football. If Branko and Nick T can do it, so can we," they said at a press conference held at Buonavoglia's on Ramsay.

PAUL HENDERSON (KEEPER): Some outstanding performances from a keeper who filled in after a lengthy stay out of the side, was then dropped again, before regaining his spot a few weeks later. If it wasn't for 'Hendo', Spirit's month would have been considerably worse.

MARK BYRNES (SWEEP-ER): After the U/17 World Cup he made the step up to senior footy. His maturity reminds IS of another precocious talent, Joe Simunic. Let's hope Byrnes does not go overseas too early.

SCOTT BAILLIE (CENTRAL DEFENCE): Big, strong, fast and full of heart. This Newcastle-born defender has not let his high-flying side down. Everyone talks about Olympic's

creative players, but it's Baillie et al. who give the side its steel.

IVAN VICELICH (CENTRAL DEFENCE): We've said it before and we'll say it again: this lad is good. He has all the attributes a central defender needs, plus he can push forward well and scores his fair share.

NICK MEREDITH (WIDE LEFT OF MIDFIELD): Olympic fans know all about Nick Meredith. They loved him when he played at Leichhardt five years ago. His left peg is arguably the sweetest in the league.

BRETT EMERTON: (WIDE RIGHT OF MIDFIELD): It's simple. Tell 'Emo' to run at defences out wide and the rest should take care of itself. Has had an outstanding month despite a minor controversy surrounding Harry Kewell (he had to deny he hates Harry).

IVO DE JESUS (HOLE BEHIND FRONT TWO): His ideal position, de Jesus has been scoring freely all year. In a solid and at times pedestrian Cosmos

line-up, he stands out. Is out of contract at the end of this season.

MARK SILIC (CENTRAL MIDFIELD): Just because he plays for the Knights does not vitiate the fact that he is back to his best and would not look out of place in most squads.

ANDY VARGAS (CENTRAL MIDFIELD): Again, another player who plays at a regional club but would have a much higher-profile at a big city club. The former Carlton midfielder has all the South American skills and plenty of guts.

JOHN BUONAVOGLIA (STRIKER): His piece of 'Maradona' magic against Falcons proof that this little player is a huge talent. Is back to his scoring best. Given the hype Breakers are very keen to hold on to him.

ANDY HARPER (STRIKER): His combination with Buonavoglia is beautiful to watch. He is an intelligent player with an excellent attitude. This has arguably been Harper's best ever season. Good on telly too!

THE COACHES



Lee Sterey
Newcastle Breakers



Vlado Vanis
Melbourne Knights

Top bloke, top coach. That's Lee Sterey. To have had Breakers on top of the ladder, albeit for 48 hours, in February is a huge achievement and proof that it takes more than the throwing of bucket loads of money to bring success.

Sterey's style fits Newcastle's like a glove. He is unpretentious and he makes the most of the fact that, as he says "there are no egos in the dressing room." The side is built on hard work, discipline and organisation, with a touch of flair provided by the front two.

If he quit tomorrow the city would probably react in a similar fashion to how the Glory fans felt about Stange.

Sterey's assistant would be Vlado Vanis. Has revived his side's fortunes just in time for the visit of Peter Beardsley.

'The Big Moose' just loves the game and has a huge appetite for coaching. Again, coaching a so-called low-profile club means he does not get the press some of the bigger clubs' men receive. The stats tell it all, unbeaten over February with three draws and three wins, including a 3-0 home win over top six side Carlton. Can't do much better than that, can you?



Former Soccerroo defender and AIS coach Steve O'Connor. One of a number of good quality candidates available in Australia to coach the Young Soccerroos and Joeys.

Steve O'Connor

Next Young Soccerroo coach?

By Roger Sleeman

In discussions about the development of youth players in Australian football, the role of the Australian Institute of Sport is often overlooked.

The list of players who have graduated from the AIS reads like a 'Who's Who' of Australian footballers.

We were reminded of this fact most recently in the Soccerroo international against Hungary when seven former graduates; Viduka, Laybutt, Corica, Foster, Skoko, Muscat and Moore donned the green and gold.

Since 1990 Steve O'Connor, the former Sydney City and Soccerroo great and now head coach at the AIS, has overseen the development of the production line in Canberra, without, I might add, the accolades some administrators seem to receive.

However, the man who participated in the record three consecutive NSL championship successes of Sydney City from 1980-2, and played 44 times for his country, is now standing up to be counted.

With Les Scheinflug's departure from the national youth coaching job, Steve O'Connor is considered by many good judges to be a logical candidate for the position.

In this interview with Roger Sleeman, O'Connor discusses his coaching experiences at the AIS, his views on the state of Australian football and his credentials for the position of national youth coach.

ROGER SLEEMAN:

What is it like to be part of the small number of former players who are employed full time in the game?

STEVE O'CONNOR:

We talk about the modern day player drain to overseas professional football but over the years our inability to retain the expertise of our former players has been even more critical.

When I retired as a player in 1989, after seventeen years in the professional ranks, I was facing a great void in my life.

Fortunately, after completing coaching courses at the AIS, I was approached by Ron Smith, head coach at the time, to become assistant coach after Gary Cole had resigned from the position.

I'm definitely one of the lucky ones but the sad fact is until the game becomes more professional, players will continue to leave after retirement with many losing

complete contact.

R.S. How do you compare the players of today with those of your generation?

S.O. You have to remember we were true part timers and in the NSL there were sometimes only four or five teams in a season which were truly competitive.

In the NSL today all teams are competitive and fitness levels are much higher, players are much younger and skill levels have improved.

Admittedly we had players at Sydney City like

Farina, Mitchell and Patikas who succeeded at the highest level overseas but due to the semi professional nature of the league, players often couldn't reach their true potential.

R.S. How can you talk about improvement in playing standards when apart from Emerton and Cardozo from Sydney Olympic, Burns and Griffiths from Parramatta Power and a handful of others there are very few star players in the NSL at the moment?

S.O. When the best players like Talia, Corica, Juric, Craig Foster, Muscat, Milicic, Fox, Viduka, Skoko, Moore, and Aloisi, who all attended the AIS are recruited overseas, it's fairly difficult to promote star player status.

You can't blame the players for taking the opportunities to play overseas.

What we need is a viable NSL to encourage more of these players to stay in Australia, especially those in Asia and in the lower divisions of the UK and Europe.

exposure to the South American game where I've been with AIS teams many times in the last decade.

The emphasis is for players to reach the highest skill level in holding up the ball and passing with precise accuracy and timing so that defences can be opened up.

A vital element in maintaining possession is close support so every player develops strong team awareness as well as individual skills.

The aim is for a player to fit into any team pattern with a thorough tactical understanding of their role in team play.

They must learn to play in tight situations particularly where they're isolated from supporting players and are closed down quickly by opponents.

Also we do a lot of work just outside the penalty area in finding ways to penetrate the last line of defence because theoretically you can play the prettiest football until you reach the scoring zone but if you can't capitalise on possession to score goals, you can't achieve results.

R.S. How do you rate the coaching standards of the NSL?

S.O. Coaches today are more tactically aware and because there are more clubs training on a full time, players are more able to cope with the physical demands of the game.

However, just because clubs are full professional doesn't guarantee coaches are working in the right areas.

We still see a lot of teams knocking hopeful high balls into the penalty area as a major attacking weapon.

That's fine if players can lose their opponents but more often than not keepers and tall defenders have a field day.

Our game is still characterised by an inability to break defences down just out-

wider recognition in the football world?

S.O. There's no question about the facilities we offer for players because they rank with the best in the world.

Our ability as a production line in delivering international class players has been there for all to see since the 1980s.

Perhaps we should be promoting our services more vigorously and people will sit up and take more notice of our achievements.

On the other side of the coin I can't say we're inundated by expressions from the media or the governing bodies to assist in marketing our services but that is fairly typical of our game.

To this day it remains fragmented where everybody does their own thing and the game remains static as a result.

R.S. Why do you think you should be considered for the position of National Youth Coach?

S.O. As a full time coach at the AIS I've been involved in coaching at youth level for the last ten years, forty-six weeks of the year and six days a week.

I've been on tours every year with the AIS, mainly to South America, directing the activities of 18-20 players.

There are very few people in Australia who can match my experience in youth coaching, not only in the hands on situation but also in the planning area.

R.S. If you weren't considered for the youth position, would you entertain an NSL coaching position?

S.O. I'm happy at the AIS but one always has to explore options. If I didn't get the youth job, a step up to NSL may be the best way to gain recognition for elevation to a national team job.

The thing that concerns me most is when is Soccer Australia going to advertise the position so the successful candi-



Steve O'Connor, with son on shoulders, with some of his previous league-winning AIS students. Pictured is Marconi's Michael Turnbull (front third from left), Glory's Ljubo Milicevic (extreme right) and Strikers' Wayne Shroj (right of O'Connor). Pic by Roy Hay.

Naturally, the best players will never stay here because of the financial rewards available abroad.

R.S. What is the Steve O'Connor philosophy of coaching?

S.O. I base my game plan on possession football, a legacy of my constant

side the penalty area, something Kenny Boden at Sydney City was a master at.

We need to take this next step in creating more chances in attack to make our game more exciting with more goal scoring opportunities.

R.S. Why doesn't the AIS receive

date can plan for elimination matches for the Joeys and U/20 squad at the end of the year?

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND TWENTY FIVE

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS v MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

1 Bob Catlin	1 Joey Rayher
2 Shane Pryce	2 Ivan Jolic
3 Andrew Roberts	3 Ante Kovacevic
4 Adam Sanderson	4 Jason Vukadin
5 Todd McManus	5 John Didulica
6 Glenn Sprod	6 Mark Silic
7 Travis Dodd	7 Dragi Nastevski
8 Mark Wilson	8 Ivan Kelic
9 Chris Tancheski	9 Paul Urlovic
10 John Buonavoglia	11 Mijo Trupkovic
11 Luke Tomich	12 Murtala Toyin Abbas
12 Robert Angievski	13 Lance Plunkett
13 Brad Wiecezorek	14 Paul Magdic
14 Greg Owens	15 Ransford Banini
15 Joshua Ferguson	16 Alex Kriatzoglou
16 Vasko Trpceviski	17 Brandon Vassalo
17 Paul Wheeler	18 Roddy Vargas
18 Andrew Harper	19 Zlatko Maglic
19 Chad Mansley	20 Martin John
20 Bradley Swancott	21 Zeljko Susa
21 Peter Juchniewicz	22 Steven Tillinger
22 Glen Moore	23 Michael Reda
23 Damien Smith	24 Hrvoje Matkovic
24	25 Adrian Cervinski
25	26 Marko Prskalo
26	
27	

Venue: Breakers Stadium - Friday 10 February 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 16 Breakers wins: 3 Knights wins: 12 Draws 2
 Last Week: Breakers 1-1 away draw with Stallions.
 Knights 0-4 home loss to South Melbourne.

CARLTON v BRISBANE STRIKERS

1 Dean Anastasiadis	1 Clint Bolton
2 Dave McPherson	2 Glenn Gwynne
3 Craig Deans	3 Shane Stefanutto
4 Simon Colosimo	4 Andrew Davidson
5 Sean Douglas	5 Matthew Belli
6 Andrew Marth	6 Brad Ditton
7 Stuart Slater	7 Shane Smeltz
8 Mark Atkinson	8 David Pilic
9 Alex Moreira	9 Paul Foster
10 Lubo Lapsansky	10 Wayne Srhoj
11 Archie Thompson	11 Chay Hews
12 Mike Conroy	12 Peter Dwyer
13 Steve Martin	13 Stuart McClaren
14 John Markovski	14 Jade North
15 Con Anthonopoulos	15 Mark Battistin
16 David Terminello	16 Peter Grierson
17 Joe Tricarico	17 Jeromy Harris
18 David Della Rocca	18 Nick Meredith
19 Serdar Pir	19 Wade Baldwin
20 Adrian Cagalj	20 Daniel Duke
21 Andrew Packer	21 Jon McKain
22 Angelo Moutsopoulos	
23 Colin Azzopardi	
24 Joshua Kennedy	
26 Steve Horvat	

Venue: Olympic Park - Sunday 12 February 2000 7.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 5 Carlton wins: 2 Strikers wins: 1 Draws 2
 Last Week: Carlton playing tonight.
 Strikers 1-3 home loss to Glory.

PERTH GLORY v PARRAMATTA POWER

1 Tom Tomich	1 Andrew Crews
2 Robert Trajkovski	2 David Barrett
3 Jamie Harnwell	3 Michael Santalab
4 Aurelio	4 Steve Eagleton
5 Vinko Buljubasic	5 Richard Plesa
6 Gareth Naven	6 Joe Vrkic
7 Scott Miller	7 Jacob Burns
8 Troy Halpin	8 Walter Ardone
9 Alistair Edwards	9 Mile Sterjovski
10 Bobby Despotoski	10 Joel Griffiths
11 Kasey Wehrman	11 Steve Berry
12 Peter Buljan	12 Stephen Laybutt
13 Jamos Afkos	13 Milan Blagojevic
14 Dion Valle	14 John Angelucci
15 Edgar Junior	15 Danny Townsend
16 Con Boutsianis	16 Mark Byrnes
17 Vas Kalogeracos	17 Danny Kukucka
18 Hamilton Thorp	18 Lachlan Campbell
19 John Carbone	19 Matt Thompson
20 Tony Franken	20 Barney Smith
21 Ivan Ergic	21 Ahmid Elrich
22 Ljubo Milicevic	23 John Gibson
23 Jason Petkovic	28 Peter Bennett
24 Aaron Cole	29
25 Gary Faria	30 Mike Gibson

Venue: Perth Oval - Sunday 12 March 2000 4.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 1 Glory wins: 0 Power wins: 1 Draws 0
 Last Week: Glory 1-3 away win over Strikers.
 Power 1-1 away draw with Falcons.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC v GIPPSLAND FALCONS

1 Jim Kourtis	1 Bojo Jevdjovic
2 Scott Thomas	2 Dean Fak
3 Chris Zoricich	3 Manny Gotis
4 Peter Tsekic	4 Mehmed Durakovic
5 Scott Baillie	5 Jeff Hopkins
6 Ante Juric	6 Brian MacNichol
7 Zlatko Arambasic	7 Andy Vargas
8 Marcus Phillips	8 Clayton Bell
9 Pablo Cardozo	9 Robbie Puca
10 Brett Emerton	10 Sandy Robertson
11 Chris Kalantzis	11 John Hutchinson
12 Sebastian Sinozic	12 Peter Kakos
13	13 Adrian Savage
14 Gabriel Mendez	14 Doug Marcina
15 Lindsay Wilson	15 Jonathon Buhugiar
16	16 Juan Nilo
17 Paul Kohler	18 Michael Katz
18 John Kyriazopoulos	19 Igor Mandic
19 Nick Carle	20 Simon Miotto
20 George Bouhoutsos	21 Ben Cassar
21 Lee Miot	
22 Pete Zorbas	
23 Dylan Macallister	
24 Norman Tome	
25 Hussein Jomaa	
26 Adam Giantar	

Venue: Belmore Oval - Sunday 12 March 2000 6.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 16 Olympic: 4 Falcons wins: 6 Draws 6
 Last week: Olympic: 2-0 away loss to Kingz.
 Falcons 1-1 home draw with Power.

SYDNEY UNITED v CANBERRA COSMOS

1 John Crawley	1 David Milin
2 Ray Younis	2 Toplica Popovich
3 Mark Racker	3 Danny Burt
4 Velimir Kupresak	4 Nicholas Purdue
5 Eddie Bosnar	5 Jason Polak
6 Vince Savocca	6 David Winnie
7 Mirko Jurilj	8 Daniel Watkins
8 Nahuel Arrarte	9 Alex Castro
9 Mario Jermen	10 Michael Musitano
10 Ante Moric	11 David Arranz
11 Tom Pondeljak	12 Brian Hamilton
12 Tom Maric	13 Harry James
13 Matthew Zec	14 Glen Kolpak
14 Kain Rastall	15 Ilija Prenzowski
15 Aytec Genc	16 Robbie Hooker
16 Joe Moric	17 Nikola Mrdja
17 Nick Bosevski	18 Geoff Howarth
18 Steve Bozinovski	19 Grant Barlow
19 Greg Saric	20 Scott Conlon
20 Steve Tolios	21 Elliot Zwangobani
21 Zvonko Uslebrka	22 Andrew Clark
22 Colin Luff	23 PJ Roberts
23 Terry Palapanis	24 Ivo De Jesus
24 Andy Rakic	25 Gabriel Gonzalez
25 Ante Deak	30 Angelo Konstantinou
30 Brett Hughes	

Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre - Sunday 12 March 2000 6.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 10 United wins: 7 Cosmos wins: 1 Draws 2
 Last week: United 4-0 away loss Force.
 Cosmos playing tonight.

SOUTH MELBOURNE v ADELAIDE FORCE

1 Milan Udvaracz	1 Vilson Knezevic
2 Steve Iosifidis	2 Attilio Hornjik
3 Fausto de Amicis	3 Ivan Zelic
4 Nick Orlic	4
5 Con Blatsis	5 Alex Tobin
6 David Clarkson	6 Carlo Talladira
7 Steve Panopoulos	7 Damian Mori
8 Vaughan Coveny	8 Carl Veart
9 Paul Trimboli	9 Nick Sabljak
10 Michael Curcija	10 Aurelio Vidmar
11 John Anastasiadis	11
12 Richie Alagich	12 Nathan Day
13 Adrian Cuzzupe	13 John Fusco
14 Anthony Magnacca	14 Michael Cartwright
15 Goran Lozanovski	15 Louis Brain
16 George Goutzoulis	16 Matthew Kemp
17 Jim Tsekinis	17 Angelo Costanzo
18 Robert Liparoti	18 Bradley Hassell
19 Tasos Psonis	19 Claudio Pelosi
20 Chris Jones	20
21 Rade Culbirk	21 Dong Ki Kim
22 Mustafa Mustafa	22 Shane Thompson
23 Chris Roche	23 Jonathan Lihou
24 Andy Vlahos	

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium - Wednesday 5 April 2000 7.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 38 South wins: 20 Force wins: 17 Draws 11
 Last week: South 0-4 away win over Knights.
 Force 4-0 home win over Sydney United.

LIVE FRIDAY 10 MARCH 7.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**NORTHERN SPIRIT V
MARCONI STALLIONS**



SPIRIT

- 1 John Perosh
- 2 Robert Enes
- 3 Matthew Langdon
- 4 Matthew Bingley
- 5 Mark Rudan
- 6 Luke Casserley
- 7 Robbie Slater
- 8 Tony Perinich
- 9 David Seal
- 10 Nicola Bertl
- 11 Troy Cranney
- 12 Simon Catanzaro (below)
- 13 Philip Moss
- 14 Shane Lyons
- 15 Anthony Faria
- 16 Paul Bilokapic
- 17 Paul Wearne
- 18 Graham Arnold
- 19 Jess Van Stratten
- 20 Michael Cunico
- 21 Paul Henderson
- 22 Adam Snyder
- 23 Elvis Olic
- 24 Ryan Griffiths
- 25 Jack Sobczyk
- 26 Adam Griffiths
- 27 Abbas Saad
- 28 Sean Cranney
- 30 Michael Prentice

STALLIONS

- 1 Michael Turnbull
- 2 Chad Gibson
- 3 Mark Babic
- 4 Dominic Longo
- 5 Pan-Keum Kim
- 6 Christian Care
- 7 Darren McDonald
- 8 Zeljko Babic
- 9 Brad Maloney
- 10 Mike Smith
- 11 Danny Invincible
- 12 Buddy Farah
- 13 Pierluigi di Gia
- 14 Francis Awaritefe
- 15 Harry Karl
- 16 Brendan Renaud
- 17 David Aceski
- 18 Paolo Marchesini
- 19 Kris Trajanovski (below)
- 20 Vlado Zoric
- 21 Josaia Junior Sauturaga
- 22 Daniel Severino



Venue: North Sydney Oval
Friday 10 March 7.30PM
Head-to-Head: 4
Spirit: 2
Marconi: 2
Draws: 0
Last Week: Spirit 0-3 home loss to Wolves
Stallions 1-1 home draw with Breakers



LIVE SUNDAY 12 MARCH 6.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**WOLLONGONG WOLVES V
FOOTBALL KINGZ**



WOLVES

- 1 Leslie Pogliacoml
- 2 George Souris
- 3 Alvin Ceccoll
- 4 Robert Stanton
- 5 David Cervinski
- 6 Matthew Horsley
- 7 Paul Reid
- 8 Anthony Surjan
- 9 Sasho Dimoski
- 10 Stuart Young
- 11 Scott Chipperfield (below)
- 12 Neil Harlock
- 13 Noel Spencer
- 14 Saso Petrovski
- 15 David Huxley
- 16 Peter Lahanas
- 17 Esala Masi
- 18 Chad Bishop
- 19 Paul Dimech
- 20 Daniel Berlframe
- 21 Christian Zelvis

KINGZ

- 1 Michael Utting
- 2 Che Bunce
- 3 Riki Van Steeden
- 4 Fabio Macollno
- 5 Jonathon Perry
- 6 Marcus Stergiopoulos
- 7 Wynton Rufer
- 8 Chris Jackson
- 9 Fred de Jong
- 10 Dino Mennillo
- 11 Robbie Middleby
- 12 Harry Ngata
- 13 Levent Osman
- 14 Batrum Suri
- 15 Ivan Vichelich
- 16 Lee Jones
- 17 Mark Elrick
- 18 Stuart Riddle
- 19 Leigh Kenyon
- 20 Jason Batty
- 21 David Moya
- 22 Aaron Silva
- 23 Simon Eaddy
- 24 Ross Nicholson



Venue: Brandon Park
Sunday 12 March 6.30PM
Head to Head: 3
Wolves: 2
Kingz: 1
Draws: 0
Last Week: Wolves 0-3 away win over Spirit.
Kingz 2-0 home win over Olympic.



**Want to see
SOCCER
every
weekend?**

**See more soccer
This weekend's telecasts**

**Northern Spirit v Marconi Stallions Friday night.
Wollongong Wolves v Football Kingz Sunday night.**

**To Subscribe Call:
Optus Television 133 399 or AUSTAR 132 432**